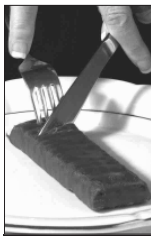


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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

World

Indonesia election: Retired Indonesian Gen. Wiranto filed complaints Thursday in Jakarta with the Supreme and Constitutional courts, alleging that widespread irregularities at the polls damaged his chances of victory in the country's first-ever direct presidential election.

Most analysts don't expect the legal challenge to change the July 5 poll results. Front-runner Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono finished with 35.58 percent of the vote, followed by President Megawati Sukarnoputri with 26.29 percent and Wiranto with 22.21 percent. Yudhoyono and Megawati will compete in a run-off election Sept. 20.

Taigating death: A German court in Berlin on Thursday lifted the jail sentence of a former DaimlerChrysler engineer convicted of causing the death of a woman and her daughter with his high-speed taigating, ruling that "he is no Rambo of the road" and deserves only probation.

Rolf Fischer, 35, was convicted in February of negligent manslaughter and sentenced to 18 months in prison.

Rwanda genocide: A former Rwandan banker accused of participating in the country's 1994 genocide is being held in Brussels, Belgium, prosecutors said Thursday.

Ephrem Nkezabera, 52, was arrested June 21 in Brussels and is being held on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity, said a spokeswoman for the federal prosecutor's office.

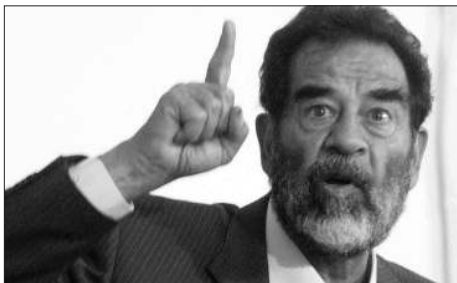
Madrid bombings: Leaders of Spain's new Socialist government said Thursday there was never any evidence that Basque separatists were behind the Madrid bombings and accused the former government of withholding information of an Islamic link.

Seminary porn: A Vatican inspector investigating a Roman Catholic diocese where authorities uncovered a vast cache of child pornography at a seminary in Vienna has ordered the local bishop, Kurt Krenn, not to talk to media, Austrian radio reported Thursday.

Klaus Kueng, appointed earlier this month by Pope John Paul II, said he imposed the gag order to contain what he called "damage that has gone far beyond the St. Poelten Diocese."

Nation

Pub crawl ban: The Newport, R.I., City



Saddam's health: Deposed Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein, shown in a July 1 courtroom appearance, is suffering from a chronic prostate infection and has refused to have a biopsy to prove he does not have cancer, Iraqi Human Rights Minister Bakhtiar Amin said in an interview Thursday on Al-Jazeera television. X-rays and blood tests carried out by U.S. military doctors did not show anything more serious than the infection, he added, and Saddam seemed to be in good health otherwise. Saddam, 67, has been held under U.S. detention at an undisclosed location in Iraq since his capture last December.

Council on Wednesday unanimously approved an ordinance banning pub crawls.

The proposal follows the death of a 21-year-old college student in a bus accident outside a Newport bar in May. Businesses with liquor licenses who violate the ordinance would face fines of up to \$1,000 and 30 days in jail.

Illinois Senate race: Republican Jack Ryan officially withdrew from the U.S. Senate race Thursday, nearly five weeks after a sex scandal forced him to end his candidacy.

His exit came a day after Republican leaders said they were tired of waiting for him to take the step and scheduled a meeting of the committee that will choose his replacement.

Jammed phone banks: A former New Hampshire state Republican Party official who tried to stop Democrats from getting to the polls two years ago could end up losing his own right to vote.

Chuck McGee, the party's former executive director, pleaded guilty Wednesday in Concord to jamming Democratic phone banks on Election Day 2002. If the sentence he receives Oct. 29 includes prison time, he won't be allowed to vote while behind bars.

Laci Peterson trial: Scott Peterson's lawyer wants a judge to either dismiss the murder charges against his client or declare a mistrial because he alleges a police investigator lied on the witness stand.

Mark Geragos maintains Modesto Detective Allen Brocchini fabricated part of his testimony to help prosecutors prove that Peterson killed his pregnant wife, Laci, in their Modesto, Calif., home and dumped her body into San Francisco Bay.

Judge Alfred A. Delucchi called a special hearing on Thursday for Geragos to explain why he should act in Peterson's favor.

Cosby remarks: Bill Cosby defended his controversial comments on blacks, adding that the music industry is "glorifying the wrong things" as he spoke about parenting and children at a college conference in Hilton Head, S.C.

Cosby, 67, made headlines in May when he criticized some blacks for their grammar and accused them of squandering opportunities the civil rights movement gave them. "I'm going to keep on saying what I've been saying," he said Wednesday.

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Judge slams McCain sailor with 5 years

Sentence for forcible sodomy is more than twice what prosecutors sought

BY NANCY MONTGOMERY

Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — A military judge sentenced a 7th Fleet sailor Thursday to five years in prison — more than double what prosecutors had sought — for performing oral sex on a sleeping shipmate.

Cmdr. John Maksym superseded prosecutors' argument for two years in prison and defense attorneys for six months, saying that defendant Fonzy Knight, a 26-year-old seaman on the USS John S. McCain, had preyed on his shipmate and failed to show remorse for his crime.

The sentence came as a surprise to those in the courtroom, who just minutes before had

heard Knight give a statement that impressed even prosecutors as one of the most "eloquent" they had ever heard.

The statement included the story of his mother's death when he was 2, his own sexual abuse by a cousin and a minister, learning that the man he thought was his father was not, and his effort to be "tougher and stronger to face challenges life delivers without warning."

Kimball Call, one of Knight's defense lawyers, had told the judge that six months' confinement would suffice to serve justice, protect sailors and deter future similar crimes, and would make his client a better man through reflection and counseling. "Six months is ... a grow-

ing season. The seeds grow and sprout and bear fruit. He needs those six months. That's all he needs," Call said.

Still, Call said later, the sentence was not completely unexpected.

Knight also was sentenced to a dishonorable discharge, reduction in rank to E-1 and pay forfeiture. He was taken to the base brig, where he'll stay until he's transferred to a military prison in California.

Maksym on Wednesday found Knight guilty of forcible sodomy of a petty officer first class from the McCain. The petty officer, a married man in his 30s who'd befriended the younger sailor, told investigators he had awakened in his Darwin, Australia, hotel room

April 26, after a night of heavy drinking during a port call, to find Knight performing oral sex on him. He was horrified, he said, and pushed Knight away.

Later, he tearfully told another shipmate that something had happened with Knight and soon an investigation was initiated.

Knight told investigators he thought the sex was consensual, although he admitted that the petty officer was asleep.

According to military law, force is inherent in any sexual assault in which a victim is asleep or otherwise cannot give consent, and penetration occurs.

Call said Thursday that defense attorneys will ask the convening authority for the court-martial, Commander Naval Forces Japan, for clemency.

Call said they'd seek to have the sentence reduced to two years' confinement, the same sentence the prosecution had asked for.

Military judges are given wide latitude in sentencing, unlike civilian judges who must conform to strict statutory guidelines.

But in the military justice code, forcible sodomy, for example, may be punished by anything from no confinement to life in prison without possibility of parole.

Military judges' sentences and verdicts are reviewed by convening authorities, which have the power to set aside convictions and reduce sentences, but not to increase them.

E-mail Nancy Montgomery at: montgomery@pstripes.osd.mil

Misawa bachelor housing nails 5-star award

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN

Stars and Stripes

MISAWA NAVAL AIR FACILITY, Japan — A fresh bathrobe with slippers every morning. Free Internet service 24 hours a day. Complimentary soda, water and instant wonton soup.

Guests who stay in the Navy's combined bachelor housing at this northern Japanese base get five-star treatment.

It's like lodging in the Holiday Inn but cheaper: \$10 a night for most sailors. Distinguished visitors pay more — up to \$45 a day — but they get fine Noritake china, a bowl of fresh fruit and flat-screen televisions in their rooms.

But then, Misawa NAF has one of the finest lodging facilities and barracks in the Navy, officials were notified this week that the command will receive the prestigious Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Award for Excellence in Bachelor Housing for 2014.

It's the fifth consecutive time in

19 years — the award is handed out every two years — Misawa NAF has snagged the Zumwalt.

Navy officials say they believe that streak is a first among Navy commands.

"This truly was a team win, and I'm proud to be part of the team," said Capt. Wayne Radloff, NAF Misawa's commanding officer.

More than one command can earn the Zumwalt in a given year but to be eligible, an installation must achieve a five-star rating for both its bachelor permanent residence and transient lodging facilities.

A team of Navy bachelor housing inspectors recommended Misawa NAF for the Zumwalt after visiting the facility earlier this month, said Senior Chief Petty Officer Pedro Magistrado, the combined bachelor housing officer.

"They want to make sure that sailors get the same treatment in every single room," Magistrado said. "It's about how you take care of your guest."

Bachelor quarters at Misawa

NAF encompass 771 rooms in six buildings — four for guests and two for enlisted sailors assigned to Misawa.

Magistrado has been a part of two of Misawa NAF's Zumwalts. One of the first changes he made was to replace bunk beds in the barracks with full-size beds, and reduce occupancy from two to one sailor. He wanted the rooms to be different from the shipboard.

During his almost three-year tenure, the barracks received about \$7 million of renovations, to include new furniture, carpet and wallpaper. The latest addition is a "super DV" room, for distinguished visitors. The spacious quarters includes an office and two bathrooms; it's the only base that accommodates with air-conditioning, Magistrado said.

Magistrado said the key to the five-star rating is its quality of life and customer service. "It's all about teamwork," he said of his staff of 21, including sailors and Japanese civilians.

E-mail Jennifer H. Svan at: svan@pstripes.osd.mil



JENNIFER H. SVAN/Stars and Stripes

Senior Chief Petty Officer Pedro Magistrado, the combined bachelor housing officer at Naval Air Facility Misawa, visits one of five distinguished visitor rooms at the base's Navy lodging.

NAF Misawa recently earned the Admiral Elmo R. Zumwalt Award for Excellence in Bachelor Housing Management. It's the fifth consecutive time the command has been named for the award.

Managers leave their desks to meet with PX customers

Customers had the opportunity to "Meet the Managers" at the base exchange on Camp Zama. Here Manager Steve Ryle jobs down notes pertaining to customer comments to improve services.

JIM SCHULZ

Stars and Stripes



Sasebo goes to TCCOR-SW

BY GREG TYLER

Stars and Stripes

Officials on Thursday declared Tropical Cyclone Condition of Readiness Storm Watch at Sasebo Naval Base, Japan, on the coast of southwestern Kyushu, based on predictions that Typhoon Nanthem will pass over, or just south of, the island.

"We are very confident the base should not receive potentially damaging winds based on the current model," said Petty Officer 1st Class Aaron Kawczak from the Naval Pacific Meteorology and Oceanography Sasebo Detachment.

The typhoon on Wednesday was predicted to move toward Iwakuni Marine Corps Air Sta-

tion, which entered TCCOR III Thursday. However, by late afternoon Thursday forecasts indicated the storm would not create damaging conditions on the air station, which is in southern Honshu Island.

Thursday afternoon the typhoon was 253 miles south of Tokyo moving at 4.6 mph with winds of 92 mph gusting to 115 mph.

Because Nanthem is a slow-moving storm, it remains uncertain when it will affect Sasebo, forecasters said; it could be Sunday or Monday.

"This is not like the typhoons we usually see moving quickly through our area," Kawczak said.

E-mail Greg Tyler at: tyler@pstripes.osd.mil

Iran postpones first national conference

BY SABAH JERGES

The Associated Press

BAQUBA, Iraq — A national conference considered a crucial first step in the country's fledgling move toward democracy was postponed for two weeks, an organizer said Thursday, a day after a massive car bombing that killed 70 people.

The conference had been due to start Saturday. But it has been plagued by difficulties before it even began.

Key political groups have been promising to boycott, leaders in ethnically diverse areas have been unable to agree on delegates to send — and even before Wednesday's car bombing, officials have expressed worries the gathering will be a target for terror attacks.

Abdul Halim al-Ruhaimi, one of the organizers, said that after U.N. requests, the Iraqi government agreed to a postponement until mid-August to give officials time to speak with groups that had been reluctant to attend.

U.N. requests delay to encourage wider participation by key groups

U.N. officials told The Associated Press they had repeatedly called on organizers to delay the conference for as long as a month to ensure wider participation and to ensure it was properly prepared.

Al-Ruhaimi denied the suicide attack had any role in the decision to postpone the conference, which is to select a national assembly that will have some semi-parliamentary powers.

But the delay highlighted how Iraq's new government has struggled to get momentum in the democratic process even as violence has shown no sign of easing.

An American soldier was killed Thursday in clashes between U.S. forces and insurgents in Hawija, a town about 150 miles north of the Iraqi capital, the military said. Two U.S. Marines were killed in

clashes a day earlier in Iraq's western Anbar province. The deaths brought to at least 909 the number of U.S. personnel killed in Iraq since the war began.

A wave of kidnappings continued — with the 22nd truck driver taken hostage by insurgents determined to hinder reconstruction and drive out coalition forces.

The insurgent group of Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi kidnapped the Somali truck driver and threatened to behead him in 48 hours if his Kuwaiti company doesn't stop working in Iraq, according to a videotape aired Thursday. The new abduction came a day after another militant group announced it had killed two Pakistani hostages.

Another militant group that kidnapped seven foreign truck drivers said Thursday it would kill one of the hostages within 24 hours if

its demands were not met, according to a video shown on Al-Arabiya television.

The group, calling itself "The Holes of the Black Banner," is holding three Kenyans, three Indians and an Egyptian and would begin beheading them last Saturday if the truck drivers' Kuwaiti employer did not cease business in Iraq and the hostages' countries did not withdraw all their citizens from Iraq.

Iraqi health officials, meanwhile, raised the death toll by two to 70 from Wednesday's suicide car blast, which devastated a busy, shop-filled street Wednesday in Baquba. The bomb targeted Iraqi men waiting outside a police station to sign up for the force.

A Polish soldier was killed and six wounded when a series of roadside bombs set off by remote control went off Thursday and showed

ered their patrol with shrapnel on a road south of Baghdad, the Polish Defense Ministry said.

Ukraine, meanwhile, is planning to reduce and eventually pull out its 1,650 troops from Iraq — the fourth largest non-U.S. contingent in the country.

The war has long been unpopular in Ukraine, and the government faces upcoming elections.

A Defense Ministry spokesman, Vyacheslav Boldinuk, said Ukraine is negotiating its plans with the United States and Poland, but he gave no time line, saying only, "There will be a decrease of troops."

News of the latest hostage drama in Iraq followed Wednesday's announcement by a militant group calling itself the Islamic Army in Iraq that it had killed two Pakistani hostages because Pakistan was considering sending troops to the region.

Afghanistan's U.S. suspect has media ties

BY FRANK GREVE

Knight Ridder Newspapers

WASHINGTON — A lot of U.S. journalists saw a familiar face when soldier of fortune Jonathan Keith Idema turned up in an Afghanistan court last week, charged with kidnapping Afghans and detaining them at his private compound in central Kabul, the capital.

Idema, 48, from Fayetteville, N.C., has had a long — and sometimes questionable — association with the news business. In the process, he's led and misled reporters and consumers of their news.

On the plus side, at least for Idema, were his appearances on TV programs as prestigious as CBS's "60 Minutes II" as an expert on al-Qaida and the Taliban. He also received a 2001 National Press Club award for online journalism.

On the downside was a hunger for publicity so keen that it took his implausible stories over the top. The latest, offered from prison last week via a U.S. freelance ally, bears this headline: "IDEMA: I STOPPED HUGE BOMB PLOT TO KILL G.I.'S IN AFGHANISTAN." Says He Used Loid Melissa Ethridge Music to Make Terrorist Confess."

Idema denies abusing Afghans. He says Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld knew of his activities in Afghanistan, where he faces up to 15 years in prison if convicted. He's already served three years in a North Carolina prison on criminal fraud charges brought in 1998.

That conviction led editors at U.S. News & World Report and "60 Minutes" to delete references to Idema from a prize-winning 1995 story about nuclear missiles being smuggled out of Russia, even though Idema was the original trigger on the story.

Many other journalists were less skeptical of him. They sometimes referred to him as a Green Beret, even though Idema's three years of active-duty Special Forces experience ended more than 20 years ago, according to the Defense Department.

Some were dazzled by his audacity or used him to gain access to exotic figures such as Afghan militia leaders. Others neglected to mention him in their stories: an eager and presentable representative of the tight-lipped U.S. special operations community, or so he claimed, who was willing to talk — on camera.

Freelance TV cameraman Edward Caraballo of New York City, who was arrested and charged with Idema in Kabul, was in a "deep embedment" with Idema's mysterious Counter-Terrorist Group, Idema told reporters after their arrest.



DETROIT FREE PRESS/RET

Americans Edward Caraballo, left, Jonathan Keith Idema, center, and Brent Bennett appear in a Kabul, Afghanistan, courtroom last week. They are charged with assault, robbery and torture of Afghans.

What Idema really did, beyond assisting reporters and humanitarian aid deliveries in Afghanistan, is unclear. Caraballo was part of a TV movie team that had been struggling since 1994 to tell and sell Idema's life story, according to James Morris, a California freelance writer involved in the effort.

Another member of the team, freelance TV producer Gary Scurka, 51, was wounded by Taliban gunfire while Idema and Scurka were on patrol with Northern Alliance troops in Afghanistan in November 2001.

Sometimes Idema had terrific material. In late 2001, he lured Dan Rather to Afghanistan with al-Qaida training films — authenticated by U.S. authorities — that Idema said he'd obtained through friends in the Northern Alliance.

In other appearances, Idema pushed information that's since been discredited.

Medal approved to reward AF food-drop participants

BY LISA BURGESS

Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Air Force has authorized the award of the Defense Department's Humanitarian Service Medal to airmen who assisted with airdrops of food to hungry Afghans during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Hundreds of airmen assisted in packaging and delivering nearly 2.5 million rations during the mission, according to Master Sgt. Ronald Tull, a spokesman for the Air Force's Personnel Center at Randolph Air Force Base, Texas.

The Humanitarian Service Medal has been around since 1977, is awarded to members of the Armed Forces "who distinguish themselves by meritorious direct participation in any significant military act or operation of a humanitarian nature approved by the Department of Defense."

The awarding of the medal recognizes the food drop and other humanitarian operations that took place from Oct. 7, 2001, to May 31, 2002, Tull said in a Wednesday telephone interview.

To qualify for the medal, airmen must have been assigned or attached to a unit participating in the humanitarian efforts, and they must have directly participated in the relief actions, according to an Air Force message issued July 4.

The unit's activities must have affected locations within the land area, airspace, or waters of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Gulf of Oman, or the Arabian Sea north of 20 degrees latitude and west of 68 degrees longitude.

Airmen who qualify

Airmen assigned or attached to the following units have been awarded the DOD Humanitarian Service Medal:

- The Combined Air Operations Center, Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia
- The Regional Air Movement Control Center, Al Udeid, Qatar
- The 437th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron, Ramstein Air Base, Germany
- The 37th Airlift Squadron, Ramstein Air Base, Germany
- The 351st Air Refueling Squadron, Royal Air Force Mildenhall, England
- The 2nd Space Operations Squadron, Falcon Air Force Base, Colo.
- The 315th Airlift Wing, Charleston AFB, S.C.
- The 62nd Airlift Wing, McChord AFB, Wash.
- The 446th Airlift Wing, McChord AFB, Wash.

Source: U.S. Air Force

Air Force officials also may be awarding the medal to airmen who were working in U.S. or overseas units that are not actually in the places where the humanitarian relief was delivered, but were supporting the OEF operations.

Airmen who think they might qualify for the medal should go to their military personnel flight office and ask for assistance. Useful supporting documents to bring along include temporary duty (TDY) orders; letters, memos or certificates of appreciation; or decorations and citations that verify participation in the humanitarian actions.

E-mail Lisa Burgess at: burgessl@stripes.osd.mil

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Jury has case in carjacking

Sergeant is accused of taking Iraqi sheik's SUV

BY KIMBERLY HEFLING
The Associated Press

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. — A military jury began deliberations Thursday in the case of an Army sergeant charged with carjacking a sheik's sport utility vehicle in Iraq.

The soldier took the stand Wednesday, arguing he participated only because an officer told him to do it and because he did not think it was a criminal act.

"I was a soldier fulfilling my duties to my lieutenant within the rules of engagement," said Sgt. 1st Class James Williams, 37, of rural Westmoreland County, Va.

Williams, who is from the 101st Airborne Division, testified for about three hours in the second day of his court-martial. He is charged with armed robbery and willful dereliction of duty for allegedly allowing his soldiers to consume alcohol. If convicted, the father of two with 17 years of Army experience faces up to 15 years in prison.

The prosecution has maintained that Williams' act of taking the SUV was illegal and that he knew it was a violation of the rules to allow alcohol to be consumed in Iraq. Prosecutors have argued that Williams helped orchestrate a cover-up story that the vehicle was abandoned.

The Army later paid Sheik Ahmed W. Al-Faisal \$32,000 for the SUV.

Williams said he went along with the cover-up story because



Williams

the lieutenant, Bradley Pavlik, feared getting into trouble.

The day the SUV was taken, Williams testified that Pavlik threw a tantrum because two of the four platoon's vehicles — including Pavlik's — were down, and he told squad leaders to find him a vehicle.

The opportunity arose later that day during a trip to the market to buy chicken when the SUV cut off another Humvee in a two-vehicle convoy Williams was in, he said. After about a five-minute chase, the SUV stopped, and the SUV was taken without force after the driver exited the vehicle, Williams said.

When they returned to the compound, Pavlik was "happy when we brought the vehicle back. He said, 'You guys finally got me a truck,'" Michael J. Harvey, a former Army specialist in the platoon, testified Wednesday.

But when Pavlik learned the men did not leave a receipt as they had been instructed to do under the rules of engagement if a civilian vehicle was seized for military purposes, Pavlik told the men to say the SUV was found abandoned, Williams said.

Another soldier already has been convicted in the case and sentenced to prison. Pavlik faces a court-martial starting Aug. 9.

Troops' story supported by comrades at Article 32

BY ROBERT WELLER
The Associated Press

FORT CARSON, Colo. — A second soldier testified Thursday that he spotted two civilians on a riverbank not long after other soldiers are accused of forcing two Iraqis to jump into the Tigris River, killing one.

Staff Sgt. Michael Kay testified that he could tell through his night-vision goggles the men he saw on the bank were civilians. He said his gunner, Spc. Tony Fincher, had spotted them first.

"I told him it was probably the detainees," Kay said.

The Article 32 hearing that began Wednesday is to decide whether the three defendants will face court-martial.

Two are charged with involuntary manslaughter in the alleged drowning, while the third faces lesser charges. A man identified by family members in Iraq as Zaidoun Hassoun allegedly drowned near Samarra on Jan. 3 when he and a cousin were forced to jump in the river after being caught breaking a nighttime curfew.

Defense lawyers are trying to show that it is possible no one actually drowned that night. They said insurgents have frequently faked deaths to get soldiers into trouble.

Fincher testified Wednesday that he did not see the men forced into the river, but later saw two civilians emerging from the river through thermal imaging equipment.

IN THE WORLD

Official: Israeli barrier will jut into West Bank

BY PETER ENAY
The Associated Press

JERUSALEM — A new route for Israel's West Bank barrier will bring it closer to the 1967 boundary, but the structure will still jut deep into the occupied territory in some areas, a Defense Ministry official said Thursday.

Nezah Mashiah, head of the barrier project in the Defense Ministry, told Israel Radio the new route would put the Jewish settlement bloc of Gush Etzion on the "Israeli side" of the contentious barrier. Gush Etzion — home to 40,000 Israelis — is about 6 miles southeast of Jerusalem.

In fresh violence Thursday, an Israeli helicopter fired two missiles at a Palestinian car in the Gaza Strip, killing two militants, Israeli military officials said.

Three other Palestinians were killed in separate incidents in Gaza and the West Bank.

Also, Palestinian militants in Gaza fired two homemade rockets at the Israeli town of Sderot, despite a six-week-old Israeli military operation meant to prevent such attacks. No one was injured.

Mashiah said the Defense Ministry's new map is meant to comply with an Israeli Supreme Court ruling last month, which found that a 20-mile section of the

barrier near Jerusalem violated Palestinian rights and international law.

The Supreme Court said its ruling would apply to other sections of the 425-mile barrier. One-quarter of the structure has been built.

The fate of two other large West Bank settlements — Maale Adumim and Ariel — has not been determined yet, Mashiah said.

On Thursday, the Israeli newspaper Yediot Ahronot quoted Dov Weisglass, a top adviser of Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, as telling a Wednesday meeting with Defense Ministry officials that there was "no choice but to relocate the fence to the Green Line."

The International Court of Justice in The Hague, Netherlands, this month ruled in a nonbinding opinion that the entire barrier was illegal and that it should be torn down.

Israel says it will ignore that ruling and a U.N. General Assembly resolution calling on it to follow the court's decision.

Palestinians charge that the barrier's route is meant to prevent them from establishing an independent state in the West Bank and Gaza, lands Israel captured in the 1967 Mideast war.

Israel says the barrier is necessary to prevent militants from attacking its towns and cities.

The barrier is an integral part of Sharon's plan to pull out of the Gaza Strip and four West Bank settlements by the end of September 2005.

Elsewhere, Israeli forces entered the Rafah refugee camp near the Gaza-Egypt border Thursday to look for arms-smuggling tunnels, the army said. Bulldozers destroyed at least 18 abandoned buildings the army said were used by militants to fire on Israeli forces.

Also in Gaza, two Palestinians were killed when an explosive device they were carrying blew up near the Khan Yunis refugee camp, Israeli military sources said.



Flood victims carry their belongings as they leave their inundated house in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on Thursday. Deaths from monsoon rains across South Asia stood Thursday at more than 1,300, with the Bangladesh government reporting more than 450 people killed since June.

U.N. to seek foreign aid for flooded Bangladesh

BY FARID HOSSAIN
The Associated Press

DHAKA, Bangladesh — The United Nations said Thursday that it will seek international aid to help Bangladesh recover from monsoon floods that have washed away rice crops, villages and livestock, and killed 452 people in this impoverished nation.

Torrential monsoon rains and melting snow from the Himalayas have engulfed two-thirds of Bangladesh and large chunks of neighboring India, and also caused deaths in Pakistan and Nepal.

Landslides, collapsing houses, drowning, disease and snake bites have brought the death toll across South Asia to 1,338 since mid-June, and it is expected to surpass last year's figure of 1,500 for the annual rainy season.

Flooding and related problems have killed 768 people in India, 113 in Nepal and five in Pakistan,

according to reports by officials compiled by The Associated Press.

In Bangladesh, a delta nation of 140 million people, the floods have killed 452 people and marooned or displaced up to 30 million people, the Food and Disaster Ministry said Thursday.

The worst floods in six years have overwhelmed this nation as relief workers struggled to get supplies to millions of people crammed into temporary shelters in schools, on boats or river embankments.

"The United Nations ... will embark on preparations for an international appeal in response to the severe flooding in Bangladesh," said a U.N. press release issued in Dhaka.

Forest fires spread from Portugal to Spain

BY JOANA MATEUS
The Associated Press

LISBON, Portugal — Firefighters were struggling to control raging forest fires in Portugal on Thursday, while blazes across the border in southern Spain were some of the worst seen in a decade.

At least 34,594 acres have burned to a crisp in parts of the southern region of Andalusia since fires broke out there two days ago.

"It has been the largest fire for the last 10 years in Andalusia," said Ana Fernandez from Plan Infoca, the region's task force against forest fires.

In Portugal, fires started Sunday in numbers and intensity that recalled last summer when five percent of the country was smoking before rains arrived in late August.

In the Algarve tourist and beach region along the Atlantic Ocean west of the Gibraltar strait, several blazes joined to



A lone man tries to fight a forest fire early Wednesday morning in Boticas, Vila Real, northern Portugal.

form a wall of flames about 44 miles wide.

Hundreds of firefighters from both countries worked round-the-clock to control the blazes, battled from the sky, too, by planes dropping tons of water and fire suppressants.

Thousands of acres of eucalyptus and cork tree forests and several houses were destroyed in Portugal, and several hundred people evacuated from their homes.

More than 81,500 acres of forest and agricultural land has been lost to fires between January and July, the government said in a statement.

Thousands of acres of eucalyptus and cork tree forests and several houses were destroyed in Portugal, and several hundred people evacuated from their homes.

Arab militants chain up, burn refugees in Sudan

The Associated Press

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia — Arab militias chained civilians together and set them on fire in Sudan's western Darfur region, where tens of thousands have been killed in a 17-month conflict, according to a report by an African Union monitoring team.

The immigration came during a July 3 attack on the village of Suleia by the pro-government militias

known as the Janjaweed, the monitoring team said in its report.

It did not say how many people were killed.

The report, which was not signed but was written on African

Union letterhead, also said the village of Ehada "had been burnt and deserted except for a few men ... [It was] an unwarranted and unprovoked attack on the civilian population by the Janjaweed."

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Russians pushing for Kalashnikov profits

BY ALEX NICHOLSON

The Associated Press

MOSCOW — The Kalashnikov, like vodka, seems quintessentially Russian. But, as with vodka, plenty of other countries make versions of the assault rifle, and Russia's arms export agency isn't flattered.

It doesn't help that the foreign versions come cheaper.

The Kalashnikov and its foreign copies aren't the most sophisticated or accurate guns, but their simplicity and stalwart reliability have made them the world's most popular automatic weapons — an estimated 100 million of them have been produced over the last half-century.

Even the United States thinks well of it, as evidenced by Washington's decision to purchase tens of thousands for use in Iraq. That's what ranks with Rosobornexport, the Russian export agency, the guns bought by the United States were made in Bulgaria.

"By rights, these products should be bought at the factories where they were first developed," a Rosobornexport spokesman complained this week, speaking on condition of anonymity. "We would like the United States to buy from the company that first made it. It's not a pleasant situation."

Russia, trying to regain its

strength in the worldwide arms market, reported a 20 percent jump in arms sales last year to \$5.4 billion. But these days, the Izhmash factory, birthplace of the Kalashnikov, is producing only a few thousand AK-model guns a year.

AK stands for "Avtomat Kalashnikov" — automatic Kalashnikov. Rosobornexport says it isn't planning any immediate measures to pressure buyers into purchasing Russian-made Kalashnikovs. It's unclear if any inducement could buck the market, because the foreign versions are not only cheaper but also just as good.

Bulgarian weapons-maker Arsenal, which won a contract last year from the United States to supply light weapons to the new Iraqi army, makes a version of the Kalashnikov configured to NATO-standard 5.56-millimeter ammunition, reportedly for \$100 apiece. Russian-made AKs sell for \$500-\$1,000, according to Maxim Pyadushkin, a small-arms expert and editor in chief of the defense magazine Russian/CIS Observer.

The Russians' predicament is made up of various ideological and strategic strands.

The Kalashnikov's qualities — especially its ability to keep firing in sandy conditions that jammed more sophisticated weapons such

as the U.S.-made M-16 — made it popular among Third World revolutionary insurgents when the Soviet Union supported. So the Soviets shared their gun-making know-how with their friends.

Today, factories in more than 15 countries manufacture versions of the weapon, including Poland, Hungary, North Korea, Cuba, India and Egypt. Production may be prolific, but designer Mikhail Kalashnikov sees only "kopecs" in royalty payments, according to Rosobornexport.

"It was the 1940s — there was no possibility of registering a patent. Now more than 50 years have passed and by law his original invention can't be patented," the agency spokesman said. "Deep in his soul he perhaps feels it is unfair."

By contrast, Eugene Stoner, who designed the M-16, is a multimillionaire from royalties.

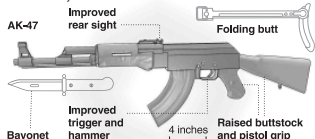
The Kalashnikov's genius, says Pyadushkin, is its simplicity. Pyadushkin recalls how, as a Soviet boy of 15, he and his classmates had to learn to dismantle the weapon in 45 seconds. A professional soldier had to do the same in 15 seconds, using one hand.

U.S. troops in Iraq who picked up the Cold War-era weapon on raids were quick to appreciate its rugged reliability. U.S. troops value them not only because they

KALASHNIKOV ASSAULT RIFLE, AK-47

Design sees little changed in half century

More than 50 of the world's armies have AK-47 and its derivatives in their arsenals, making this Russian firearm the most widespread weapon in use. Early in its career some key changes were made and the AK-47 became the AKM, which is still in the Russian army stocks.



RUSSIAN EXPORT CONTRACTS OF RIFLES

Importer	Contract date	Delivery	Weapon	Value
Unknown African country	October-November 1999	End of 1999	Kalashnikov assault rifles	\$4 million
Indonesia	Unknown	August 2000	AK-101, 102	Unknown
Bhutan	February 2001		AK-101, 104	\$1 million

Sources: Small Arms Survey; "Modern Firearms & Ammunition" by Max R. Popovik

AP

jam less than the M-16 and M-4 in Iraq's dusty conditions, but because it is simpler they can kill with fewer shots in close combat situations. But Kalashnikov or Rosobornexport would have their work cut out to prove that

foreign factories should pay them royalties.

"In other countries it is produced in a modified form," Pyadushkin said. "It's virtually impossible to show that Kalashnikov's rights have been violated."

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- ふわふわ
- わたあし・かき氷
- インターナショナルによるゲーム
- 青少年スポーツゲーム (日米共同によるもの)
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Allawi backs call for Muslim force to stabilize Iraq

BY GEORGE GEDDA
The Associated Press

JIDDAH, Saudi Arabia — Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi urged Islamic countries Thursday to "stand as one group" against terrorists and voiced support for the formation of Saudi-led Muslim force to help stabilize his country.

In London, an Arab League official said any such force would only be acceptable if ordered by the U.N. Security Council and linked to a specific timetable for withdrawal of U.S. forces from Iraq.

The Iraqi official told a news conference here that the region's leaders should unify and "stand as one group" against "those gangs, those terrorists and those criminals" who he said are threatening the Arab world.

Allawi said that if the 15-month-old insurgency in Iraq prevails, countries such as Saudi Arabia, Syria and Lebanon would not

be safe. Allawi spoke a day after a militia attack 35 miles outside of Baghdad killed dozens in the deadliest attack since he took office a month ago from a U.S. governing authority.

With Secretary of State Colin Powell standing at his side, Allawi voiced support for a Saudi initiative under which Muslim countries would contribute to the creation of a new force that would help bring stability to Iraq.

Under the Saudi proposal, Arab and Muslim countries that do not border on Iraq would be invited to contribute. Iraq believes involvement by its immediate neighbors in the country's security could ultimately lead to political conflicts with them.

"We look forward to the contribution of the Arab and the Islamic states with the exception of the neighboring states," Allawi said.

Powell welcomed the Saudi initiative and said the time may be ripe for a more active role by



Colin Powell

Arab and Muslim countries based on the handover of sovereignty to Allawi, along with the approval of a U.N. Security Council resolution that gives legitimacy to his interim government.

In London, Arab League envoy Ali Hamid said that "a solution with the help of the international community is a good idea provided that the Americans declare they are going to withdraw and not involve NATO in Iraqi affairs."

A militant group posted on Internet threat Thursday warning Arab nations not to participate. "Our swords will be drawn in the face of anyone who cooperates with the Jews and the Christians," said the statement, issued in the name of the Jamaat al-Tawhid al-Islamiya-Omar al-Mukhtar Brigade, a little-known group whose main title means the Group of Islamic Monotheism.

Web site threatens Italy with 'waterfalls of blood'

BY MAGGIE MICHAEL
The Associated Press

CAIRO, Egypt — A statement purportedly from an al-Qaida-linked group threatens "waterfalls of blood" in European cities because the continent didn't respond to Osama bin Laden's demand that they leave Iraq and Afghanistan within three months.

The statement, dated Wednesday, was posted on an Islamic Web site known for its extremist content. It was written in the name of the Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades, which has made similar threats in the past.

According to the threat, Italy will be the first to face attack for not meeting bin Laden's demand. Premier Silvio Berlusconi has been a steadfast U.S. ally and contributed about 3,000 soldiers to the coalition, behind only the United States and Britain. Poland has 2,400 troops in Iraq, while several other European countries have smaller contingents there.

"We will create waterfalls of blood that will drag you to their depths. You have condemned your people to that. The infidel Europe has done the same to its people by following America. We will destroy European cities, starting by you, Berlusconi," the statement said. "The cities will bleed until all of you, European leaders and people, come to your senses.

Withdraw your deadly missions from Iraq."

The same group made a similar threat against Italy on Monday.

There was no immediate comment from the Italian government, but it had approved continued funding for the Iraq mission Tuesday, a day after the other statement.

In an audiotape on April 15, bin Laden said he was calling a truce for three months and urged European states to leave Iraq, Afghanistan and other Muslim countries within that period or risk a terror campaign.

There was no way to verify the authenticity of the statement.

U.S. officials and some terrorism experts believe Abu Hafs al-Masri Brigades, which claimed responsibility for the Madrid train bombings that killed about 191 people on March 11, lacks credibility and has only tenuous ties to al-Qaida. It has issued claims for events in which it almost certainly had no involvement, including kidnappings in North America and Britain.

"Today, we have declared a bloody war against you. We will not stop our attacks until you have come to your senses," the statement said.

A spokesman for the Polish Foreign Ministry, Boguslaw Majewski, said the government had no knowledge of the threat and was not reacting to it.

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Pakistan arrests alleged embassy bomber

BY PAUL HAVEN

The Associated Press

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan — Pakistan has arrested Ahmed Khalifa Ghailani, a Tanzanian al-Qaida suspect wanted by the United States in the dual 1998 bombings at U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, Pakistan's interior minister said Friday.

Ghailani — who is on the FBI's list of 22 most wanted terrorists, with a \$5 million reward on his head — was arrested Sunday in the eastern city of Gujrat along with at least

15 others, Interior Minister Faisal Saleh Hayat said.

"This is a big success," Hayat told Pakistan's Geo television network.

"As a result of our investigation, it became clear that he was a major figure wanted for the bombings," Hayat said.

He said Ghailani was in Pakistani custody but indicated he might be turned over to U.S. authorities after investigations are completed.

Ghailani is under indictment in the United States for the embassy bombings, which

killed more than 200 people, including 12 Americans. He is suspected of buying the truck used as the vehicle bomb in the attack on the U.S. Embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, in which 12 people were killed.

He could face the death penalty if convicted of the charges, which include murder of U.S. nationals outside the United States, conspiracy to murder U.S. nationals outside the United States, and attack on a federal facility resulting in death.

Ghailani, who also goes by the names "Poopie," "Fupi" and "Ahmed the Tanzani-

an," was also one of seven wanted al-Qaida suspects that the FBI and Justice Department asked for help in finding in May to help avert a possible terror attack over the summer in the United States.

An intelligence official said on the condition of anonymity that the raid was carried out on information from a suspected Pakistani militant who was arrested in a separate raid in the eastern Punjab province.

Pakistan has so far arrested more than 500 al-Qaida suspects from different parts of the country.

Embassy denies alert

MEXICO CITY — The United States denied Wednesday it had portrayed the Caribbean resort of Cancun as dangerous, in apparent response to Mexican concerns over a travel alert posted by the State Department on Friday.

However, a new demonstration was broken up with tear gas in Cancun on Wednesday, just hours after the U.S. Embassy in Mexico City issued a statement suggesting some news media had exaggerated the alert.

The original travel alert issued Friday — which warned about "demonstrations and possible travel delays in Cancun" — raised concerns that tourists might avoid the resort, which is Mexico's biggest tourism revenue-earner.

Visit to be a first

LONDON — South Korean President Roh Moo-hyun and his

wife will make a state visit to Britain in early December, Buckingham Palace announced Thursday.

It's the first time a South Korean president has been accorded a state visit to Britain. Precise dates were not announced. Queen Elizabeth II and her husband, Prince Philip, made a state visit to the Republic of Korea in April 1999.

American climber killed

ZERMATT, Switzerland — An American climber was killed in a fall on Switzerland's famed Matterhorn mountain, police said Thursday.

The victim was identified as Mark Reisch, 47, of Michigan, police spokesman Markus Rieder said.

Rieder said the initial police investigation indicated that the accident occurred Monday morning as Reisch and another American man were climbing down the mountain. A police statement said the men were descending by

rope when Reisch, who was lower down, fell for undetermined reasons.

DNA scientist dies

SAN DIEGO — Nobel Prize-winning scientist Francis Crick, who with James Watson discovered the double-helix structure of DNA, paving the way for innovations from DNA blood tests to genetically engineered tomatoes, has died. He was 88.

Crick died Wednesday at the University of California, San Diego's Thornton Foundation, according to Brendolyn Williams, a spokeswoman for the Salk Institute, the research body where Crick worked. He had been battling colon cancer.

The British-born Crick was 36 and working at the University of Cambridge's Cavendish Laboratory in 1953 when he and the American-born Watson, just 24, struck upon the idea of a molecular structure twisted like a ladder into a double helix.

From The Associated Press



American Bobby Fischer in Sveti Stefan, Yugoslavia, in 1992. Chess legend Fischer has been languishing in a detention cell at Narita International Airport, near Tokyo, facing the possibility of deportation.

Politician offers to be Fischer's legal sponsor

BY ERIC TALMADGE

The Associated Press

TOKYO — An influential Japanese politician said Thursday he has volunteered to be Bobby Fischer's legal guarantor and urged immigration authorities to release the former world chess champion from an airport detention cell where he is being processed for deportation.

Ichiji Ishii, a former deputy foreign minister and three-term member of Parliament, said he

was volunteering to support Fischer "as a person who likes chess, and as a friend." To be released, Fischer needs a Japanese citizen to guarantee that he won't leave the country.

Japanese authorities on Tuesday turned down an appeal against their decision to deport Fischer for allegedly traveling on an invalid passport. Fischer was detained after trying to board a plane for the Philippines on July 13.

Fischer has until Friday to lodge another appeal.

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IN THE STATES

Congress to act on Sept. 11 panel's findings

BY ALAN FRAM
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Congress is eager to show voters it's acting on the Sept. 11 commission's call for overhauling intelligence agencies, but turf fights, partisan rivalries and the task's sheer complexity are sure to slow lawmakers' work.

Reflecting the momentum for change sparked last week by the commission's widely acclaimed final report, at least nine committees are planning more than 15 hearings in what is normally a sleepy Au-

gust on Capitol Hill. The first is Friday, when the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee hears from commission chairman Thomas Kean, a Republican, and his Democratic deputy, Lee Hamilton.

Indeed, with White House and congressional control at stake in November — and 9/11 panel members and relatives of attack victims promising to publicly lobby for change — it would be tough for President Bush and lawmakers to do nothing.

Underscoring the political pressures, Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry has said that commission sug-

gestions for a national intelligence director and an overarching counterterrorism center in the White House should be adopted immediately.

Bush is expected to approve executive orders making some changes in days.

House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., has called House Democrats to an Aug. 10 meeting with commission members.

House leaders say they want bills ready in September, Senate leaders by Oct. 1. But they could meet stiff resistance from the CIA, Pentagon and other agencies, and law-

makers of both parties who stand to lose power.

Rep. Porter Goss, R-Fla., retiring chairman of the House Intelligence Committee and a candidate to head the CIA, said it's tough to move quickly on such an issue.

The commission recommended creating a Cabinet-level national intelligence director to coordinate the work of the 15 agencies involved and their estimated \$40 billion budget.

It also proposed a national counterterrorism center to foster joint planning by those agencies, and more powerful congressional oversight committees.

FBI warns Calif., New Mexico about possible terror acts

BY TED BRIDIS
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The FBI warned police in California and New Mexico that it received information about possible terrorist activity in their states. However, the warning wasn't specific about particular targets or a method of attack, a federal law enforcement official said Thursday.

The FBI decided to pass along the threat information, but warned that it was considered unsubstantiated and uncorroborated, said the official, who spoke only on condition of anonymity.

The vague warning was distrib-

uted to authorities in California, New Mexico and some other Western states the official did not identify.

U.S. officials earlier this month warned that a regular stream of intelligence indicates al-Qaida wants to attack the United States to disrupt the upcoming elections.

Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge has said the government does not have specific knowledge about where, when or how an attack might take place.

Security was extremely tight at the Democratic National Convention in Boston this week. No terrorist-related activity has been reported.

White House allows EPA to skip pesticide review for endangered species

BY JOHN HEILPRIN
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The Environmental Protection Agency no longer will have to consult with other federal agencies to determine if approval of a pesticide might jeopardize plants and animals shielded under the Endangered Species Act, the Bush administration said Thursday.

The streamlined regulations from the Interior and Commerce departments mean the EPA will not adhere to an Endangered Species Act requirement that it consult in each case with Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service and Commerce's National Marine Fisheries Service. Those two agencies oversee the federal species protection statute.

EPA will now skip consultations with the other agencies when making a decision, after scientific review, that a pesticide

probably won't harm a species' survival. EPA still can ask for formal consultations, but the other agencies will presume EPA's review work is adequate.

Fish and Wildlife Service Director Steve Williams said it was too difficult to look at each possibility among hundreds of active chemicals and 1,200 threatened and endangered species. While required by the law, consultation has routinely been ignored.

"Because of the complexity of the consultations to examine the effects of pest-control products, there have been almost no consultations completed in the past decade," said a statement issued by the three agencies as well as the Agriculture Department.

By not requiring so many consultations, the officials said it was more likely the ones that matter most would get done.

The Endangered Species Act was signed into law by President Nixon in 1973.



Ester Williams retrieves furniture from her flooded living room in Lancaster, Texas, on Thursday after heavy rains overnight flooded the creek that runs behind her home.

Foot of rain drenches parts of Texas

BY JAY JORDEN
The Associated Press

DALLAS — An estimated foot of rain fell during fierce storms overnight in parts of North Texas, flooding homes and highways and knocking out power to thousands. One man died in a weather-related wreck that toppled power lines onto his vehicle and cut power to homes.

Southern Dallas County was especially hard hit by flooding, with 175 to 200 homes damaged by high water in the suburb of Lancaster.

Some areas of South Dallas County received up to 13 inches of rain, said National Weather Service forecaster Bob Carle.

In Southeast Dallas County, a railroad trestle was

washed out by strong waters. The Union Pacific track remained in place, but a 50-foot stretch of track no longer had soil underneath.

Authorities received more than 80 calls for high-water rescues in South Dallas County, said Sgt. Don Peritz, a spokesman for the Dallas County Sheriff's Office. It was unclear how many people were rescued. Parts of Interstates 20, 35 and 45 were closed for a time by high water.

About 5,000 TXU Electric Delivery customers remained without power by midmorning. An estimated 45,000 were without power at the peak of the storms, said spokeswoman Eliza Anderson.

Wind gusts of 58 mph were measured at Alliance Airport, and trees were uprooted in Lewisville and elsewhere. Flights were delayed at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport.

Police search for man in case of tainted baby food

BY BEN FOX
The Associated Press

IRVINE, Calif. — Poison found in two jars of baby food purchased at the same store was not in a deadly form and the two infants who ate small amounts of the banana yogurt dessert did not even fall ill, officials said.

The contamination of the Gerber brand food was disclosed Wednesday by police, who are searching for a man they believe may have witnessed the tamper-

ing. Charles Dewey Cage, 47, of Irvine, was "in the area at a relevant time," said Orange County District Attorney Tony Rackauckas.

A man identifying himself as Cage called the Orange County Register on Wednesday night to say he needed "a good lawyer" and to deny any involvement.

"I've got two strikes on me," said the caller. "Do you think I'd do something like that? I did not do it."

When a reporter quizzed the man to confirm his identity he provided Cage's birth date.

No one has been arrested, and authorities said no more contamination was found at the Irvine supermarket.

"There's no reason to believe there is any more out there," said Dan Henson, special agent in charge of the FDA's Los Angeles field office.

The jars were tainted with ground-up castor beans containing tiny amounts of the poison ricin, said Food and Drug Administration officials who tested the baby food.

'Superman' voice dies

NEW YORK — Jackson Beck, a master of voice-over who belted the phrase "It's a bird! It's a plane! It's Superman!" to introduce the Superman radio show and used his versatile voice to promote everything from Aqua Fresh toothpaste to Combat roach killer, has died. He was 92.

Beck died Wednesday of complications of old age, according to Jeff David, a friend.

In addition to narrating Superman's adventures, Beck doubled

as villains, supporting characters and the Daily Planet copy boy, Beany, on the popular radio broadcasts of the 1940s.

He also portrayed the voice of the bully Bluto in more than 300 Popeye cartoons. Beck's strong, deep voice was heard on television commercials for Sugar Frosted Flakes, Pepsi, Brawny paper towels and GI Joe, as well as football and boxing promotions for NBC.

"I'm an advertising man, and I treat my voice as a business," Beck said in 1990. "People who treat it as art don't make any money."

From The Associated Press

'9/11' turns up heat in Crawford

BY ANGELA K. BROWN

The Associated Press

CRAWFORD, Texas — Brian Munoz already saw the documentary "Fahrenheit 9/11" in a theater, but he and some friends couldn't resist a chance to watch it again outdoors on a muggy summer night — especially only a few miles from President Bush.

They were among more than 3,000 people — three times more than originally expected — who sat on lawn chairs, pillows or blankets Wednesday night, soaking in Michael Moore's film that lambastes Bush's decision to go to war with Iraq and his handling of the 2001 terrorist attacks.

"A lot of people are calling it propaganda, but if you look at it hard, the facts are there," said Munoz, who drove nearly 200 miles from Lewisville in a car covered with anti-Bush slogans.

Moore initially said he would come to Crawford and discuss the movie afterward — and even invited Bush to attend. But on Wednesday, Moore decided to remain at the Democratic National Convention in Boston, saying his presence in Crawford would overshadow the film's message and detract from the convention.

There were plenty of locals in Bush's adopted hometown on hand to lend support to their famous neighbor, who has been vacationing at his Crawford ranch for several days but has made no public appearances.

Carol Bernhard and several friends came from Austin and held a huge sign proclaiming "This is Bush Country." She said she didn't plan to see the movie: "I'm not going to give that traitor any of my money."

After more than 300 people attended a pro-Bush rally earlier Wednesday night, many spilled out of the building and gathered on Main Street holding signs praising Bush and criticizing Moore.



Moviegoers watch a free showing of "Fahrenheit 9/11" in Crawford, Texas — a few miles from President Bush's ranch — Wednesday. Bush supporters also gathered to protest the movie's showing.

Dozens of Bush supporters then walked about a mile to a parking lot, where the movie was shown. They stood at the entrance, chanting "No More Moore!" several times during the film. A few got into heated discussions with moviegoers as a policeman stood between them.

The film's screening was organized by the Crawford Peace House, an interfaith gathering place that often serves as a catalyst for peace protests at Bush's ranch.

"This was not done as a protest; it was a demonstration of free speech," said Kay Lucas, a house volunteer. Organizers said there was an \$8 suggested donation.

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Ky. governor slugs back on 'Tonight'

BY BRUCE SCHREINER
The Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Ky. — Gov. Ernie Fletcher said Wednesday that swapping gags with late-night television host Jay Leno gave him a chance to "punch back" at Kentucky's backwoods image.

Fletcher said he enjoyed his appearance Tuesday night on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno," but added he was glad to be back "doing my job and leaving the stand-up comedy to professionals."

The Republican governor defended the commonwealth's honor after Leno poked fun at the state's plans for a new image-building catch phrase. Leno offered "Kentucky: Got Teeth?" as a potential marketing slogan.

Fletcher wasn't pleased and fired off a terse letter to Leno, prompting the invitation to appear on the show.

Fletcher came out wielding a Louisville Slugger bat that he presented to Leno. Standing next to Leno on stage, the first-term governor said he wanted to "set a few things straight."

Fletcher tried to stay stone-faced when Leno offered several new marketing slogans for Kentucky during the show. Among them:

■ "Kentucky: As seen on TV, mostly on 'Jerry Springer' and 'Cops.'"

■ "Kentucky: The first state to recognize same-sibling marriage."

■ "When you don't want to deal with traffic, half our cars are up on blocks."

Fletcher said Wednesday he



NBC/AP

Kentucky Gov. Ernie Fletcher, right, and Jay Leno jokingly spar over possible new slogans for both Kentucky and Los Angeles during "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno" on Tuesday.

ken Leno would poke more fun at Kentucky.

"But it gave us an opportunity to be out there and to kind of punch back, and that's what we tried to do," the governor said.

Fletcher got in a few licks of his own, aimed at Los Angeles.

■ "I.A.: Come for the silicone, stay for the Botox."

■ "I.A.: Married, divorced, remarried, all in about an hour."

■ His last slogan — "In Kentucky, we pay higher stud fees" — a reference to the state's status as a horse-breeding capital.

For too long, the state has been

defensive about its less-than-sophisticated image, Fletcher said Wednesday.

"Historically, we've had some things that produced some stigmas, and we've got to overcome those," he said. "And the way to overcome them is first not to dwell on those things. Be willing to laugh at ourselves a little bit and then move forward with some very positive things."

Movie star Ashley Judd, whose family has deep roots in Kentucky, also talked up the commonwealth during the show.

Her suggested slogans included: "Get Lucky in Kentucky."

Vigilante mom's son now wanted for murder

BY BRIAN MELLEY
The Associated Press

SONORA, Calif. — Eleven years after Ellie Nesler pulled a gun from her purse in a courtroom and gunned down the man accused of molesting her boy, police are hunting for her son — now wanted for murder.

William Nesler, 23, severely beat neighbor David Davis, 45, early Sunday, less than an hour after being released from jail for having beaten Davis a month earlier in a fight over tools, Tuolumne County sheriff's deputies said.

Nesler remained at large Thursday morning, sheriff's Sgt. Roger Dittberner said.

A warrant for Nesler's arrest was issued Tuesday, the day after Davis died at a Modesto hospital from massive head wounds, Dittberner said.

Ellie Nesler ignited a national debate when she walked into a courtroom on April 2, 1993, and shot twice-convicted child molester Daniel Driver, 35, five times in the head as he faced seven molestation charges, including one related to her young son.



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Kerry vows to protect against terror

BY DARLENE SUPERVILLE
The Associated Press

BOSTON — John Kerry lays claim to the Democratic presidential nomination Thursday night, his moment to have a conversation with Americans and convince them he can protect them from terrorism and improve their lives better than President Bush.

In a curtain raiser, running

mate John Edwards praised Kerry as a born leader tested in Vietnam and now ready to protect the country in the age of terrorism.

"He wants to serve you — your cause is his cause," Edwards said Wednesday night as a parade of Democrats tried to focus voters' attention on Kerry's qualifications to be commander in chief.

Edwards was out early Thursday trying to swell the momentum for Kerry's speech. He had breakfast with delegates from Wyoming, Alabama and his home state of North Carolina, thanking them for their chants of support the night before.

The Massachusetts senator watched from his Beacon Hill home as Democrats formally

named him for the presidency in a boisterous, late-night roll call Wednesday. Ohio put him over the top, just as he hopes it will on Nov. 2.

Polls now show a tight race between Kerry and Bush. In a sign of the tough fight to come, the president taped new TV commercials, with his Texas ranch as the backdrop, in preparation for the resumption of a campaign ad war next month. The Democratic Party also is preparing \$6 million in ads for launch this weekend.

Hours after the final gavel at the convention, Kerry will begin hitting every key state on a two-week cross country trip by train, bus and boat.

When Kerry, 60, takes the podium to deliver the closing speech

of a unified party convention, he'll aim to tell Americans who he is, what he seeks to do and why he should be president. He is said to be planning to break through his New England reserve to reveal more of himself.

Also speaking is Jim Rasmann, an Army Special Forces lieutenant whose life Kerry saved in Vietnam.

Delegates gathered in the FleetCenter, the convention site, also will see a short biographical film portraying Kerry as a decorated Vietnam War hero and devoted husband and father — not as the wealthy, 20-year Senate veteran with a patrician's airs some see him as.

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GOP says Kerry unfit to lead in wartime

BY WILL LESTER
The Associated Press

BOSTON — The Republicans' message this week is a one-note chorus — John F. Kerry and the Democrats aren't up to the job of protecting the country from terrorists.

Polls suggest President Bush is vulnerable in many areas but is more trusted on national security. Democrats are replying with images of Vietnam War hero John Kerry surviving the war and veterans and a convention theme of a stronger America under Kerry.

Republicans released an 11-minute video Wednesday that focused on Kerry's evolving positions on Iraq over the last two years in the face of an intense struggle for the nomination and postwar problems in Iraq.

After showing the video to the news media, Republican National Committee Chairman Ed Gillespie said Wednesday: "His own words completely refute the notion that he is a strong leader. We may end up updating this Thursday night after the senator tries to explain his position on Iraq again."

Democrats responded immediately and forcefully, showing up outside the GOP war room armed with their own video about Bush.

They said Kerry's position on Iraq is not as simple as the Republicans would have voters think.

Inside the GOP war room, other high-profile officials pummeled Kerry as unfit to lead in wartime.

Former New York City Police Commissioner Bernard Kerik defended Bush's decision to go to war in Afghanistan and then Iraq after the attacks on America by al-Qaida.

"This is a war we should have started a long time ago," Kerik said. "It took this president to start the war on terror."

The Kerry campaign repeatedly has highlighted the senator's service in Vietnam and the medals he won for valiant service as a sign of his strength in times of war.

"We have always honored John Kerry's service in Vietnam," said Gillespie. "But you don't hear much about the intervening 35 years."

Edwards bids to help build 'one America'

BY TOM RAUM
The Associated Press

BOSTON — John Edwards is pledging that he and presidential running mate John Kerry will work hard to eliminate what he calls "two different Americas," one for the rich and one for everyone else.

"It doesn't have to be that way," Edwards said in his address to the Democratic National Convention. "We must build one America."

Edwards' prime-time speech Wednesday night reprised a popular theme from his unsuccessful presidential bid this year.

The freshman senator from North Carolina, who amassed a personal fortune as a plaintiff's trial lawyer, told delegates that he saw his own life as the embodiment of the American dream — and that all people should have the same opportunities.

In his convention remarks, Edwards recalled his modest upbringing in Carolina textile mill towns. "I have had such incredible opportunities in my life," he said. "I was blessed to be the first person in my family to go to college. I worked my way through, and I had opportunities beyond my wildest dreams."

"And the heart of this campaign — your campaign, our campaign — is to make sure all Americans have exactly the same kind of opportunities that I had no matter where you live, no matter who your family is, no matter what the color of your skin is."

Before Edwards assumed the stage, a collection of retired military generals and admirals appeared Wednesday evening to show their support for Kerry's candidacy. While some polls show Kerry must work to convince voters he could lead a stronger war on



The Edwards family, from left, Cate, Jack, Elizabeth, John, and Emma Claire, stand on stage after John Edwards spoke to delegates Wednesday at the Democratic National Convention in Boston.

terrorism, the presence of retired top-ranking military officials underscored the opportunities for Kerry.

"I am here as an old soldier and a new Democrat," declared retired Gen. John Shalikshvili, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Clinton administration who also served as the supreme allied commander in Europe.

His words, similar to those Kerry has used while campaigning, carried the weight of the four stars that once rested on his shoulders. To an attentive crowd, he declared: "I know about the horror of war and thus join with others like John Kerry in believing that we must go to war only when all other efforts to resolve the threat to us have been exhausted."

Democrats made the event a family affair.

His parents, Wallace and Bobbie Edwards, were there. He was introduced by his wife, Elizabeth, who in turn was introduced by daughter Cate, 22. Their two younger children — Emma Claire, 6, and Jack, 4 — joined their parents on the podium after the speech.

Edwards, 51, said his nationally televised speech as an opportunity to introduce himself and Kerry to millions of Americans, many of whom don't know much about either Democrat. It was mostly upbeat, but while he made no mention of Bush or Vice President Dick Cheney, he did slip in some pointed criticism of the Republican campaign.

"What have we seen? Relentless negative attacks against John," Edwards said of his running mate.

The Chicago Tribune contributed to this report

Sharpton breaks from convention script, criticizes Bush

New York Daily News

BOSTON — The Rev. Al Sharpton electrified the sleepy Democratic convention center last night, challenging President Bush head-on for daring to court black voters.

"Read my lips: Our vote is not for sale!" Sharpton bellowed, a tweak of Bush's father in an attention-grabbing, script-scraping speech that ran well over the allotted time and had conventioners on their feet time and again.

The crowd went wild when Sharpton invoked the party's symbol to rebut Bush's questions about black voters' loyalty to the Democrats.

"We decided we'd ride this donkey as far as

it would take us," he said.

It was hardly the sanitized criticism the Kerry campaign had demanded from speakers in an effort to go light on the Bush-bashing — and was exactly the speech some Democrats had worried Sharpton would make, fearing it would turn off swing voters.

Still, Sharpton seemed determined to try to eradicate the memory of his own presidential bid with the speech, which was swathed in civil rights references and which one longtime Democratic strategist called "transforming."

He talked about the 2000 Florida election recount, saying black voters' rights were

"soaked in the blood of four little girls in Birmingham. This vote can't be bargained away. This vote can't be given away."

Later, Sharpton told the New York Daily News that the Kerry campaign knew he would veer off message, although they did not know exactly what he would say.

He did it, he added, "because [Bush] directly challenged us. It would have been a betrayal not to answer his questions."

Sharpton spoke an hour after his longtime rival, the Rev. Jesse Jackson — whose mantle of black leadership Sharpton was attempting to take over — made an unexpected appearance Wednesday.



Al Sharpton speaks to delegates at the convention on Wednesday.

Safety advisory for baby swings

Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — AAFES has issued a safety advisory regarding Graco Travel Lite Swings, a baby swing that has the potential to collapse and cause serious injuries to infants.

The advisory is being made in cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and Graco Children's Products Inc. of Exton, Pa., and involves some 140,000 swings.

Of several Travel Lite Swings involved in the advisory, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service sold model 1850JJP at base exchanges worldwide from June 2003 to June 2004. The swings have an adjustable reclining seat, a rotating handle and a canopy.

According to AAFES' notice, the swing's carrying handle may be dropped or pushed down, causing it to hit the child in the head. Also, in some cases the seatbelt has failed to prevent children from leaning or falling forward or to either side, allowing their heads to strike the floor or the swing's frame.

According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, Graco has received 28 reports of the handle falling and 100 reports of children falling forward or to the side. Injuries resulting from such mishaps included bloody or swollen lips, red marks, bumps and bruises.

The swings were manufactured between May 5, 2003, and Dec. 11, 2003, and have serial numbers between 050503 and 121103 printed next to the model numbers on a white label under the seat. The swings also have the words "Graco" and "Travel Lite Swing" printed on each side and have buttons on the handles that activate lights and music.

AAFES is urging customers to stop using the swings immediately and to request a free repair kit by contacting Graco at Children's Products Inc., attention Customer Services, 150 Oaklands Blvd., Exton, Penn. 19341, or by logging onto the company Web site at http://www.gracobaby.com/customer-service/recall_detail.asp; recallID=16

Fixing the problem

Request a free repair kit by contacting Graco at Children's Products Inc., attention Customer Services, 150 Oaklands Blvd., Exton, Penn. 19341, or by logging onto the company Web site at http://www.gracobaby.com/customer-service/recall_detail.asp; recallID=16



JIM SCHULZ/Stars and Stripes

Firefighters back up with a fire hose during a demonstration of the firefighting trainer at Sagami Depot, Japan.

Shore-to-sub cable catches fire

An electrical fire occurred Wednesday morning in a cable supplying power from shore to the USS La Jolla, a nuclear-powered submarine moored at the Akasaki Fuel Terminal at Sasebo Naval Base, Japan.

"As soon as it was discovered, the fire was out in about two minutes," said Jon Yorlender, a spokesman for Commander U.S. Naval Forces Japan.

"There was never any fire on the La Jolla, nobody was ever in danger or injured," he added.

Cmdr. Bernard Wang, the base's chief staff officer, visited Sasebo Mayor Akira Mitsutake and briefed him on the fire, according to a Japanese newspaper report.

Senior airman found guilty

YOKOTA AIR BASE, Japan — Senior Airman Todd Caddell of the 374th Maintenance Squadron, Yokota Air Base, Japan, was found guilty July 9 of assault consummated by battery and unlawful entry, officials said recently.

He was sentenced to three months of hard labor without confinement and reduced in rank to airman first class. He also must forfeit \$250 a month for three months. A panel of officers and enlisted members found that Caddell, 20, unlawfully entered the garden apartment of another airman and assaulted his colleague's wife while she slept in her bed. The incident took place in January.

Mayors oppose Zama growth

TOKYO — Mayors from neighboring cities of Camp Zama expressed their opposition

Facing the fire

Simulators help train Army firefighters

BY JULIANA GITTLER
Stars and Stripes

SAGAMI DEPOT, Japan — Fire rips across the ceiling in a blast as thick smoke engulfs the firefighters wearing oppressively hot gear with heavy tanks as they inch their way into the unknown.

Army firefighters in Japan now can practice fighting real fires using two donated fire-training simulators from Fort Wainwright, Alaska. The trainers, a two-story simulated building and aircraft, allow firefighters to practice realistic situations safely.

"You actually get to feel the heat and everything around," said U.S. Army Garrison Japan Fire Chief Julie Thixton. "It really makes a difference."

Thixton and a cadre of new "recruits" — including USAG-J commander Col. Garland H. Williams — inaugurated the new trainers Thursday.

The trainers are self-contained, fueled by propane and computer-operated. Officials at Fort Wainwright gave the structures — together valued at \$550,000 — to Camp Zama because they couldn't be fully utilized in Alaska.

Camp Zama paid shipping and installation costs and built a training area at Sagami Depot, the Army installation in Japan with the most space.

Army firefighters from eight stations across mainland Japan will share the structure. The fire department has 122 firefighters, Thixton said.

"We're also going to open it up to the cities, to our mutual-aid companies," she said. That includes the cities of Zama, Sagami and Yokohama.

The building can be made into a

mock living room, bedroom or kitchen. It allows firefighters to practice moving hoses, working in teams and getting the water usage just right. They can cut a hole into the top to allow smoke to escape or practice climbing stairs.

"It allows you to set up what type of scenario you need," Thixton said. "It allows the firefighters to go in and see the fire, fire behavior and flashover concepts."

Flashovers are deadly eruptions when smoldering fire suddenly ignites and flames overhead.

Before new trainers, firefighters practiced on buildings awaiting demolition. Training was contingent on availability, and dangerous situations such as flashovers and backdrafts couldn't be simulated.

The trainers are computerized so in the event of an emergency the propane and flames can be extinguished immediately. Propane also burns cleaner than combustible buildings, Thixton said.

To launch the new structures, several new "recruits" suited up to experience the heat and intensity.

"It was smoky in there," said U.S. Army Japan Command Sgt. Maj. Charles Hopkins. "It was realistic. I just wish they had a larger facility."

During opening remarks, Williams said the trainers give Army firefighters a more realistic opportunity to train and allows them to practice with the Japanese city counterparts. "Our firefighters are now better-prepared to save lives and that is the ultimate goal of what we do," he said.

E-mail Juliana Gittler at: gittlerj@patriots.com.sdl

Wednesday to U.S. and Japanese officials' alleged plans to relocate additional personnel to Camp Zama.

Sagami City Mayor Isao Ogawa and Zama City Mayor Katsugi Hoshino submitted letters of protest addressed to U.S. Ambassador Howard H. Baker Jr., Japanese Foreign Minister Yoriko Kageura and Chief Cabinet Secretary Hirofumi Hosoda, opposing realignment plans the U.S. government reportedly proposed to Japan in San Francisco in mid-July.

Local news reports said the U.S. government presented a plan to relocate U.S. Army's 1 Corps from Fort Lewis, Wash., to Camp Zama, parts of Marines from Okinawa to Camp Zama and Camp Fuji and U.S. Forces Japan headquarters from Yokota Air Base to Camp Zama.

The mayors said these plans "could lead to enhancement of the functions and permanent presence of Camp Zama which conflicts the feelings of the residents who have deepened mutual understanding by various exchanges as 'good neighbors.'" They added that the 750,000 residents of the cities cannot accept the plan.

U.S. military officials have refused to comment on the news reports.

Yokota to host modeling fair

The Family Support Center at Yokota Air Base, Japan, will host a modeling fair from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday in the FSC auditorium, officials announced.

Those interested in taking part must fill out a registration form at the Family Support Center.

Call DSN 225-8725 for more information.

U.S. contractor in custody

YOKOSUKA, Japan — A U.S. Army contractor was in Japanese custody Thursday, accused by police of stabbing a woman Monday in Yokosuka city.

Jervis Herman Collins Jr., 46, a painter and welder working at Yokohama North Dock, was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder of a Yokosuka Police spokesman said Thursday. Collins is accused of stabbing a 34-year-old American woman who lived with him at an off-base residence in Yokosuka city's Hemi area.

According to news reports, Collins stabbed the woman, then threatened to jump off the building. He was injured and treated at a Japanese hospital but how the injuries occurred remained unclear, officials have said.

The man was taken into custody after being released from the hospital. The woman also was released from the hospital.

Police planned to refer the case to the Yokohama District Prosecutors Office on Friday, the police spokesman said.

National Kid's Day fun planned

CAMP ZAMA, Japan — Camp Zama Child and Youth Services is hosting a carnival Sunday in honor of National Kid's Day, the first Sunday in August.

The event is aimed at both young and old, with limbo and hula contests, rock climbing and a dunk tank. Booths will offer games and prize giveaways and parents and kids can join a pie-throwing contest.

The carnival, to run from noon to 6 p.m. Sunday at Dewey Park, is free and open to all.

For information about National Kid's Day, visit www.kidsday.net.

From staff reports

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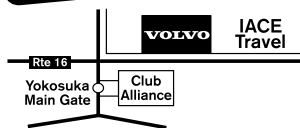
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PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER BROS./KRT

Halle Berry gets high marks for fetching feline moves in 'Catwoman'

BY MIKE SZYMANSKI

Zap2it.com

LOS ANGELES — Halle Berry is the cat's meow these days. Or, at least, she is with "Catwoman." "I have watched my cat and I listen to how he purrs and plays and walks and when he gets angry," Berry says. "And there's a sound that he makes that I've tried to use, too."

Her cat is one of the 60 homeless cats used in a scene in her last film, "Gothika," with Robert Downey Jr. In that film, she played a successful psychiatrist who is accused of brutally killing her husband. Berry's mother worked as a psychiatric nurse, and she helped her with the role. "My mom was a psych nurse at a veteran's hospital for 35 years and I've grown up with that in my life — therapy and psychology and always knowing the value and the benefit of it," Berry says. "My mom was really helpful in telling me what things a person in that situation would feel, and how the [heck] they got there."

In lots of ways, Berry says she

looks at where she is now and wonders how the heck she got there. Now the highest-paid black actress in Hollywood history, she also has an Oscar, Golden Globe, Emmy, Image and SAG Award, so she's always aware of expectations to better herself.

"People thought it was strange I was going off to be a Bond girl right after winning an Oscar," she says about playing Jinx in "Die Another Day" after her award-winning role as an abusive mom in "Monster's Ball." Then, they thought it was strange that I did "Gothika," or played Storm Stone and plays around with Benjamin Bratt.

She's keeping busy, saying "my umbrella is full," with her roles in upcoming movies, "The Guide," "The Set-Up," "Napoli: Ever After" and the animated sci-fi film "Robots." She ended her second marriage last October, and tries to maintain her privacy, saying, "There are some things that I still haven't revealed that are still secret. I've got strong family support and faith."

And, if reporters get too personal, she says kiddingly with a wave

of her hand, "I slap them."

Although she looks stunning as she walks into the room for an interview, she insists she hasn't felt pressure to always be beautiful.

"I don't buy into that pressure to be glamorous all the time. It's impossible. I mean, you get a pimple in the morning, you wake up with bags under your eyes, you see if you can use it in your work, maybe incorporate it into your character."

There's no room for bags under her eyes in "Catwoman," where she's decked out in a skin-tight leather outfit, spars with Sharon Stone and plays around with Benjamin Bratt.

"Halle is one of the most dedicated, focused actors that I've ever worked with. She's arguably one of the biggest superstars in the world," Bratt says. "But I have to give her full credit because even in the most ridiculous or seemingly insignificant off-camera moment, she would be there."

French director Pitof says, "I know people thought there would be cat fights among the cast, but they were the utmost professionals, and Halle is a superstar no matter what superhero she plays."

And what about another comic book originated role she's known for? She's not convinced she will reprise her superhero role of

Storm in the "X-Men" franchise because, she says, "My desires have been dictated by what the fans have come to me with, and what their complaints have been. After every movie, especially the real diehard fans, they often say, 'Yeah you know Storm was OK, but she should do more, she should fly, she should fight, she should be more of what she is in the comic book series.'"

"I'm not really complaining. I'm happy to be a part of it, as its been a great franchise to be a part of, but I think the fans feel that in the comic book she's represented as a little bit more of a leader."

She laughs about the comic-book turn of her career. "I wasn't an avid comic book reader, but I did read them. Batman was probably the biggest one — it was something I related to, so it's really great that now I get to be Catwoman."



PHOTO COURTESY OF WARNER BROS./SHS

Sharon Stone and Halle Berry get a little scrappy in the new film "Catwoman."

One of her idols, Eartha Kitt, is one of the most famous actresses to play Catwoman. "Being a woman of color, that meant a lot to me as a kid to see someone like me playing a character that was so universal. So, that theme has sort of come full circle for me now as I get to be the Catwoman for the new century."

She sighs, almost purrs, "That feels really good."

Hoffman a real-life hero, saves bee victim

Although he once played the reluctant "Hero" in a movie of the same name, Dustin Hoffman wasted no time rushing to the aid of an allergic bee sting victim.

The Oscar-winning actor's real-life heroics occurred two weeks ago when a woman walking on the beach with friends was stung by a bee near Hoffman's home in Malibu.

Lyle Graham began having an allergic reaction and a friend rushed to get help from the beach patrol and people nearby.

"I could feel my eyes starting to sting and swell and my lips starting to swell up as well," Graham said Tuesday on CBS' "The Early Show."

Hoffman and his wife, Lisa, were on deck chairs outside their California home when they heard what happened. Hoffman's wife, who also is allergic to bee stings, retrieved an emergency injection kit from their home and the two rushed to the woozy Graham's aid.

After she began to recover, they invited her to their deck to rest.

Graham, 36, said that as her throat was closing up, she recognized a familiar face on the sand with her.

"I did recognize that it was Dustin Hoffman but I was sure that ... I could possibly die," Graham said.



Hoffman



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YOUR MONEY

VA: active reservists can get home loans in just 90 days

BY SANDRA JONTZ
Stars and Stripes

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Department of Veterans Affairs wants activated reservists to know that to their activation, they need only three months' service, and not six years, to qualify for the VA's home-loan benefit.

Since 1992, the VA has offered its no-down payment home-loan program to Reserve and Guard members, eligible to apply after they had served six years. But if they are called to active duty, the service time is cut to 90 days, said Keith Pedigo, director of the VA Loan Guaranty Service.

"The requirement for those who are not on active duty is they must serve six years in the active selective Reserve or Guard. After six years of people doing their summer camps [training and weekend duties], they earn enough points to qualify. For those Reservists and National Guard members who are called to active duty, once they're on active duty, we qualify as regular active servicemembers."

As of Wednesday, the total National Guard and Reserve members on active duty was 150,714. The total number on active duty for the Army National Guard and Army Reserve is 123,695, Naval

Reserve, 2,904; Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve, 11,472; Marine Corps Reserve, 11,097; and the Coast Guard Reserve, 1,546.

Troops who logged fewer than 90 days of activated service but who were discharged because of a service-connected disability still are eligible to apply, he said.

"The reason most veterans go this route is because it affords them the opportunity to buy a home without having to make a down payment," Pedigo said.

Each year, about 15 percent of the VA's loans are guaranteed to active-duty personnel, and about 4 percent are guaranteed for Guard and Reserve members who qualify after their six years of service. The remainder goes to veterans.

In the past three years, the department guaranteed 1.1 million loans for a total of \$13.4 billion. Last year, the VA guaranteed 490,000 loans totaling \$64 billion, Pedigo said.

This year, however, they predict a slowdown, to about 350,000 loans.

"We're projecting it will be down from last because the refinancing boom has quieted down."

About 67 percent of the VA loans guaranteed last year were due to members refinancing at

lower interest rates. The average interest rate reduction was 1.5 percent, and a benefit to refinancing through the VA is that members don't have to pay out-of-pocket expenses such as appraisal or broker fees.

The VA's foreclosure rate last year was 6.8 percent, higher than the 3 percent of the conventional loan market, but lower than the federal Housing and Urban Development's FHA program of about 10 percent.

"By virtue of the fact that there is no down payment required, the foreclosure rate tends to be higher than the conventional loan market," Pedigo said. "It's the riskier part of the business. Making no down payment means you don't have the instant equity in the property and you're generally in a riskier position."

The VA has several programs to help keep homeowners from losing their homes, including nine regional loan centers in the United States that offer financial counseling and payment consolidation efforts.

The VA program is available only for families within the 48 U.S. states and the territories of Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Northern Mariana Islands and Guam.

E-mail Sandra Jontz at: jontzs@stripes.osd.mil



Scott Mattson, left, hands credit cards to his son Matt Hanson on Friday at Matt's summer job at Taco Bell in Scottsdale, Ariz. Matt will be going to Northern Arizona University to pursue a degree in Business.

Cash, credit or debit for college students?

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — One of the toughest decisions parents make as they send their children off to college is whether to pack checkbooks, debit cards or credit cards that the kids can use for school costs and personal expenses.

Checking accounts and debit cards have the advantage of imposing limits; if there's no money in the account, the kids can't spend.

Credit cards may allow more spending flexibility — especially in emergencies — but they can risk enticing the kids to overspend and take on debt they can't afford.

Experts say the decision should be based on a child's maturity and comfort with money. They also recommend parents be aware of their children's spending, regardless of the payment option they choose.

"In high school, the parents take care of everything financial for their kids," said Steve Avdul, co-author of "Real Life 101: A Guide to Stuff That Actually Matters." "When they graduate, the kids will be on their own. College is the transition, and it needs to be a partnership."

Scott Hanson, of Phoenix, said his son, Matthew, 18, will head for Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff this fall with a checking account.

The account has a linked debit card, which Matthew can use to buy gasoline or get cash, Hanson said. But Hanson has ruled out a credit card, at least for now.

Neale Godfrey, author of "Money Still Doesn't Grow on Trees: A Parents Guide to Raising Financially Responsible Teens and Young Adults," recommends families consider cash cards.

A number are now available, including the Visa BuXp prepaid card, which allows parents to supply money by phone or on the Internet and to monitor how it's used. Kids can use it like a debit card to purchase products or like an ATM card to get cash.

"First, you need to put your child on a budget," Godfrey advised. "Let them estimate what it's going to cost, item by item, for food, clothing, incidentals."

And put only that amount on the cash card.

The advantage, she said, is that it helps young people learn to live on a budget.

Another option is a credit card tied to the parents' accounts.

MasterCard offers a Family Account that allows spending limits to be customized for each card. Monthly statements break down purchases for each individual using the account.

WEDNESDAY'S MARKET SUMMARY

INDEXES

High	Low	Week	Last	Net Chg	%	YTD	52-wk
						Chg	High
10,553.63	8,991.11	Dow Jones Industrial	10,511.07	+11.51	+	1.7	+17.57
3,212.45	2,526.38	Dow Jones Transportation	3,086.33	+22.71	+	0.74	+2.64
286.07	225.46	Dow Jones Utilities	285.45	+0.62	+	0.22	+0.14
6,798.12	5,438.77	S&P 500 Composite	6,537.77	+10.17	+	0.16	+2.48
1,278.81	938.73	NYSE Index	1,263.63	+15.19	+	1.52	+9.75
2,153.63	1,440.88	Nasdaq Composite	2,059.26	+90.4	+	5.8	+7.24
1,363.23	968.84	S&P 500	1,095.42	+5.9	+	0.5	+1.03
418.46	471.81	S&P MidCap	517.16	-1.89	-	0.4	-0.37
541.20	448.97	S&P SmallCap	541.20	-3.41	-	0.6	-2.82
11,371.14	8,258.56	DJ Wilshire 2000	10,615.10	-87	-	0.8	-1.67

NYSE

MOST ACTIVE (\$1 OR MORE)				MOST ACTIVE (\$1 OR MORE)			
Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg	Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
Norcent	479521	3.07	-01	NASDAQ00T	152525	1.50	+01
Lucent	422554	3.50	+08	SPDR	600000	1.50	+01
Northern I	244135	16.19	+71	SemiR	329000	1.50	+01
Motorola	244135	16.19	+71	SHS2000	990000	1.50	+01
GenElec	220556	33.29	+49	DJIA	990000	1.50	+01
TimeWar	206743	16.65	-26	WheatGr	390000	1.50	+01
Pfizer	184767	31.62	-48	ShJapan	560000	1.50	+01
NokiaCp	163697	11.44	-28	WheatGr	390000	1.50	+01
Agere	157494	1.02	-05	IvaxCp	300000	1.50	+01
LSI	155235	5.06	-78	RetainIT	300000	1.50	+01
VerizonCm	140592	38.70	+84	BetaGold	100000	1.50	+01

AMEX

Most Active (\$1 or more)			
Name	Vol (00)	Last	Chg
Intel	770822	23.46	+19
Microsoft	620826	28.58	+14
Cisco	509810	20.50	-21
Oracle	450721	10.25	-13
SunMicro	409782	16.65	-88
CareerEd s	378672	33.63	-10.87
WDS Uniph	355681	3.00	-82
Appl Mngt	340563	1.86	-33
UStream	316262	17.85	-7.40
Yahoo s	243345	29.70	-30

NASDAQ

Chg
+19
+14
-21
-13
-08
10.87
-03
-32
-7.40
-30

EXCHANGE RATES

Military rates	
Japanese yen (July 30)	106.90
S. Korean won (July 29)	113.99
Euro (July 29)	\$1.274
British pound	\$1.87
Commercial rates	
Bahrain (Dinar)	0.3770
British pound	\$0.5485
Canada (Dollar)	1.3386
Denmark (Krone)	6.1695
Spain (Dollar)	\$1.66
Euro (Dollar)	\$1.2058
French franc (Dollar)	6.55
Hong Kong (Dollar)	7.75
Italy (Lira)	2036.27
Israel (Shekel)	4.5220
Japan (Yen)	111.75
Kuwait (Dinar)	0.2948
Malaysia (Ringgit)	2.336
Philippines (Peso)	56.15
Singapore (Dollar)	1.3720
South Africa (Rand)	1.50
Switzerland (Franc)	1.7554
Taiwan (Dollar)	1.493750
Turkey (Lira)	1.80
U.S. dollar	1.00

(Military exchange rates are those available to customers at military banking facilities in the country of issuance for Japan, South Korea, Germany, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. For non-currency exchange rates (i.e., purchasing British pounds in Germany), check with your local military exchange facility. Commercial rates are interbank rates provided for reference when buying currency. All figures are foreign dollars to one dollar, which is the British pound, and the euro, which is dollars-to-euro.)

PRECIOUS METALS

New York Mercile	
Gold	\$390.00
Silver	\$6.363
Interest Rates	
Prime rate	4.25
Discount rate	2.75
Federal funds market rate	4.25
3-month bill	4.25
30-year bond	7.125
Source: The Associated Press, Bank of America, Bloomberg.com	

Cents and Sensibility
Money tip of the day
Cutting commute costs

CBS MarketWatch

NEW YORK — If you do a lot of driving, commuting costs may be weighing down your wallet, no matter how high or low gas prices may be lately.

If you must drive to and from work, there are some simple things you can do to cut down on spending:

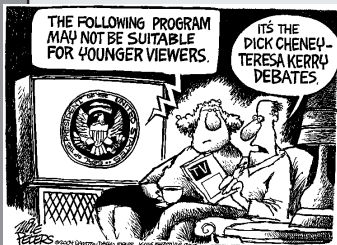
■ Clean out your vehicle. Bankrate.com reports that your car's fuel efficiency is lowered by any extra weight in the car.

■ Take care of your car. Get regular tune-ups, check your tire pressure and otherwise maintain your vehicle.

■ Adjust to the summer heat. Gas can evaporate if it has the means to escape, so be sure to tighten your gas cap when fueling up. Use your air conditioner when out on the highway, but open the windows if you're driving at low speeds or are stuck in traffic. You'll use less fuel.

Looking at the news

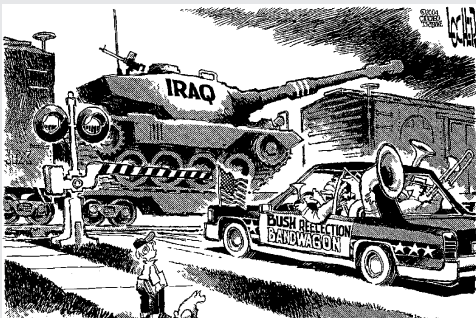
A weekly sampling of U.S. editorial cartoons



MIKE PETERS/King Features Syndicate



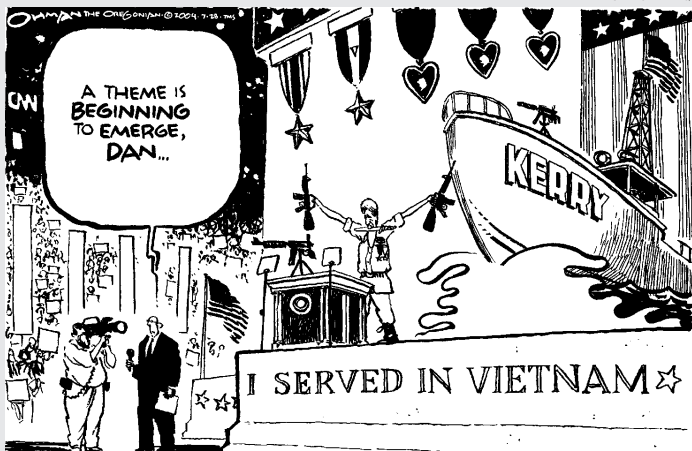
BILL DEORE/Universal Press Syndicate



DICK LOCHER/Tribune Media Services



STEVE GREENBERG/Scraps Howard



JACK OHMAN/Tribune Media Services

Mayor saves the day

OH HOWLAND — Warren Mayor Michael O'Brien went to shop for vitamins and ended up catching a suspected thief.

O'Brien was shopping at a drugstore Monday in this neighboring northeast Ohio community when he heard an assistant manager yell, "Stop!"

A man had left the Rite Aid store with what police later said was \$740 in merchandise.

O'Brien happened to be driving a detective cruiser while his city car was in the shop. He followed the man, turned on the lights and siren, pulled over a 1988 Pontiac and called for backup.

The mayor said his citizen's arrest went smoothly.

"I told the men to get out of the car and don't move and they listened to what I said," O'Brien said. "When they turned around, I said don't move and they didn't."

Howland police Sgt. Jeff Urso said officers arrested Ivan Sparks, of Warren, on a felony charge of theft and the driver of the car, Marquis Reynolds, also of Warren, on an outstanding warrant.

Rite Aid assistant manager Linda Stewart told police that a man fitting Sparks' description tried to leave the store with a basket of merchandise that included cigarettes and cologne.

"I dove for the basket because I wanted my merchandise back," she said. "The mayor ran to his car, the lights went on and he pulled him over just like on 'Dragnet.'"

Head for schools sought

DC WASHINGTON — Four finalists were selected in the search for a new leader of the city's public schools. They include the state superintendent in Illinois; the superintendent in Toledo, Ohio; the former superintendent in Rochester, N.Y.; and the superintendent in Pittsburgh. The school system continues to have low test scores and declining enrollment.

Bounty on officers

CO DENVER — An unknown group distributed flyers offering a bounty of at least \$5,000 to anyone who kills police officers, apparently in response to two recent fatal police shootings. The flyers include photos of Lt. Frank Lopez, a 63-year-old invalid killed by police July 11, and Paul Childs, a 15-year-old developmentally disabled teen shot last summer. The department's intelligence unit is investigating the threat.

No more silly-string

CA LOS ANGELES — Hollywood residents and business people tired of being in the silly-string crossfire every Halloween have asked the city to ban the colorful streams of compressed foam.

Councilman Tom LaBonge, whose district includes part of Hollywood, initially sought a complete ban but later opted to focus on Halloween, when residents complain the streets get jammed with silly-string slingers.

LaBonge said the non-biodegradable foam can fall into storm



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

drains and harm marine life, and also can endanger police, particularly those on horseback.

On Friday, without debate, a Los Angeles City Council committee asked the city attorney's office to prepare an ordinance that eventually will be put to a vote before the council.

Several other communities, including Santa Clarita and New Orleans, have restrictions against the use of silly string.

Chief will retire

AL MONTGOMERY — Police Chief John Wilson announced he will retire, partly because of a former officer's allegation that he caught the chief driving drunk. Wilson, 50, said he will retire effective Nov. 1 but plans to take administrative leave immediately. Wilson said he had planned to retire early next year but would do so now to fight the "unfounded misdemeanor case."

Boat explodes, kills one

MI HOLLAND TOWNSHIP — A boat exploded, burst into flames and sank Saturday on a western Michigan lake, killing one of the two men aboard.

The explosion on the 1959 twin-engine wooden boat knocked the men unconscious, authorities said.

When the boat's owner, John M. Huegli, awoke, he tried but failed



Shadow jumping

Tom Landess, of Virginia Beach, Va., casts a long shadow as he performs a trick Tuesday at the Ames Skatopark in Ames, Iowa. Landess is in Iowa visiting relatives in Ankeny.

to rouse Peter C. Murray and abandoned the boat as it was consumed by flames on Lake Macatawa, Ottawa County Sheriff's Sgt. Kevin Allman told The Holland Sentinel.

Divers recovered the body of Murray, 32, of Ann Arbor. Huegli, 59, of Dexter, was hospitalized for minor injuries and released.

The cause of the explosion was unknown. Huegli told authorities that the boat had been fueled and vented Saturday morning, Allman said.

Teens jump to record

MA BREWSTER — Five teens from here have hopped, skipped and jumped their way into the record books.

They took first place in a jump rope competition in Brisbane, Australia, where more than 600 athletes from 15 countries gathered for the World Rope Skipping Championships.

The four skippers and an alternate — Sara Douglass, Jessica Anderson, Kelsey Gilmore, all 18, and Danielle "Dee" Orman and Sarah Capparelli, both 17, won first place in one of eight competitions. Their 70-second routine included 30 different tricks, combining gymnastics with nonstop jump rope.

The teens are part of the Brewster Bayside Skippers, a program started a decade ago by Stony Brook Elementary School gym teacher Paul Mullin.

Mullin said that when he started the jump-rope program, parents and children didn't foresee how big—and successful—it would become. There are about 80 youngsters in the program today.

"It feels pretty good," said Orman. "To know we have the best routine in the world is really satisfying, knowing those years of hard work have paid off."

Upon hearing the news, the parents of the Brewster champions recalled 10 years of raising money, carpooling, judging competitions and shepherding their children to competitions.

"I screamed," said Sara's mother Jane Douglass, on her reaction to the news.

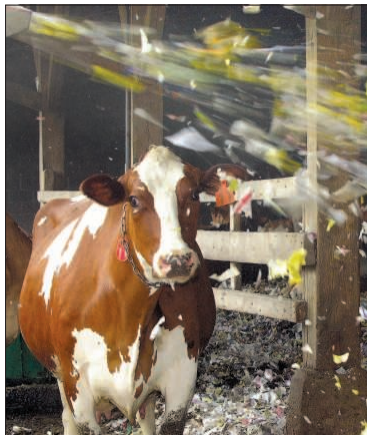
Cops face suspension

FL ST. PETERSBURG — Two Florida Highway Patrol troopers face a three-day suspension for failing to aggressively pursue a drunken driving case against an off-duty deputy last October.

Troopers Rodney Espinola and Daniel Cole said there were two men in the swerving Corvette driven by Pinellas County deputy Edmond Randall and they couldn't tell who was driving. Cole and Espinola asked to contest the proposed sanction.

Restrictions hurt clinic

MN ROCHESTER — Cash registers are ringing less in Rochester now that people from the Middle East have largely stopped coming to the city for medical services at the Mayo Clinic. Travel restrictions since the Sept. 11 attacks have made it difficult for the visitors to enter the United States. They were known for extravagant spending on hotel suites, limousines and shopping.



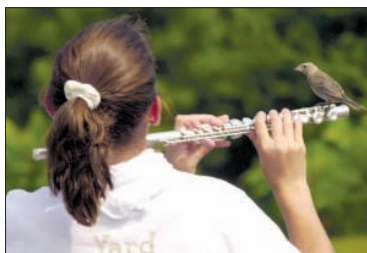
Can't believe her eyes

A red and white holstein cow watches phone books being shredded for bedding Monday at Lowell Peckman's farm in St. Thomas, Pa. More than 16,000 pounds of used phone books have been collected since July 1 as part of a Franklin County, Pa., recycling program.



Angling for a spot

A fish jumps over an oar as members of the women's Halifax Rowing Team return to the dock after competing in the Master 8 event at the Halifax Regatta last weekend in Daytona Beach, Fla.



Making music together

A small bird lands on the flute of Woodstock High School marching band member Stephanie Nutt, 14, during practice Thursday in Woodstock, Ga. The bird hovered over the band looking for a place to land before flying off the flute and enjoying the music for about 5 seconds before lighting off. The band was practicing for the upcoming school year that begins in 2 weeks.



Fish fright Ricky Boswell, 11, reacts to a fish at the Gulf of Mexico exhibit at the McWane Center on Tuesday in Birmingham, Ala. Boswell was on a field trip with Camp Fire West with their summer reading program as a treat for reading five books this summer and completing a book report for each book.



Putting on the pressure Doug Faber, a U.S. Department of Agriculture technician, uses a pressure washer and hot water to clean a combine on Tuesday at Joseph Tuchello Farms near Lakeville, N.Y. The cleaning is part of routine work to prevent the spread of Golden Nematode in potatoes as farmers rotate crops or work near potato fields.



Heartfelt salute Charles Hurtle, a Purple Heart veteran, salutes during the Presentation of Colors at a salute to Those Who Have Served & Sacrificed at Bunker Hill Monument on Tuesday in Charlestown, Ma.

City considers pet fine

AR ROGERS — City officials are considering a proposal to fine pet owners up to \$1,000 and jail them for a year if they fail to pick up their stray dogs or cats after six days — the same penalties as someone convicted of negligent homicide.

While the city says the suggested ordinance tracks with state law, pet owners fear the proposal is excessive.

"I think jail time may be a little severe. What if you're on vacation and someone else is taking care of your dog when it leaves?" said Kathy Jones, who owns a dog named Toby.

Under the ordinance scheduled for discussion Tuesday, pet owners could be cited for animal abandonment on the seventh day of impoundment.

James Willett, director of code enforcement for the city, said the proposed ordinance mirrors the state's law against cruelty to animals regarding animal abandonment. He said fines would likely be lower.

"The judge is going to make the determining factor; nothing is set in stone. It's like shopping or driving while intoxicated. People who get DWIs get less than the maximum fine," Willett said.

Bodies to be exhumed

GA SAVANNAH — After exhuming at least four bodies in an attempt to prove a link to a \$160 million inheritance, the O'Regan family of Ireland is planning to dig up seven more. Mary Sheehan died in 1983 but left no will. DNA testing has failed to connect the bodies to the family. The Georgia Supreme Court ruled that another family are closer relatives and therefore heirs to the Georgia woman's fortune.

Sex offenders database

OH COLUMBUS — Ohio started an e-mail service to notify residents when registered sex offenders move within a mile of their homes. About 10,000 people signed up in four counties that have been testing the program. The online database of registered sex offenders also is being expanded to show maps of offender addresses within one mile of a resident's address.

Wolf family to move

AZ ALPINE — A family of five Mexican gray wolves was placed in an acclimation pen south of this eastern Arizona town in preparation for the animals' eventual release into the wild. The pack, consisting of a male, a female and their three pups, will stay in the nylon mesh pen for up to two weeks, wildlife officials said. The wolves are part of a government program to re-establish wild wolves in Arizona and New Mexico.

Card finally delivered

PA SEELYVILLE — Talk about snail mail: A woman vacationing in New Jersey 37 years ago popped a card into the mail and it just arrived at her mother's house in Pennsylvania.

Dorothy Orth, of Seelyville in

northeastern Pennsylvania, baffled her daughter when she called Saturday to thank her for the card.

"What card?" Janet Richards, of Port Jervis, N.Y., asked.

When her mother said it was from Asbury Park, N.J., she remembered.

"I sent that postcard in August 1967, when my husband, Larry, and I were on our fifth wedding anniversary," she said. Orth received it July 17, almost 37 years later.

In addition to the 4-cent stamp, a 23-cent stamp was affixed, and the 18431 zip code was penciled in. The card was postmarked Aug. 19, 1967, at the Asbury Park post office, and July 14, 2004, in New York City's Brooklyn borough.

"A lot of credit goes to the Brooklyn post office and whoever got the postcard to me," Orth said.

That was Ernesto Perry, of the U.S. Post Office undelivered mail unit in Brooklyn.

The postcard was behind a machine that was recently moved, Perry said. He said he added the zip code and the 23-cent stamp and sent it on its way.

"We always try to send back mail whenever possible, it doesn't matter how long it has been lost or misplaced," he said.

Drugs found in bales

ID BUHL — A railroad car used to haul fish meal from Mexico to a southern Idaho trout farm also contained four bales of marijuana worth \$3.3 million. Workers at the Clear Springs Foods facility, which prepares food for the hatcheries, discovered the bales weighing a total of 74 pounds. State and local authorities are investigating. They doubt the marijuana was supposed to be unloaded in Buhl.

Grant will fund center

NJ PENNSAUKEN — The Delaware River Port Authority will use a \$500,000 federal grant to help build a South Jersey regional visitors welcome center. It will be located on Admiral Wilson Boulevard, the main thoroughfare into South Jersey from Philadelphia. The center will have information on tourist attractions, maps, message boards, vending machines and restrooms.

Inmates may be released

MS JACKSON — The Mississippi Department of Corrections is considering the early release of as many as 20 terminally ill inmates. Those who qualify are in the late stages of diseases like cancer and lung disease and would be too ill to cause harm.

Officials say the move would save the agency about \$400,000.

Program funds donated

IN SHELBYVILLE — Community members and businesses donated enough money to prevent Shelbyville High School officials from cutting a growing Japanese language program. Last year, 59 students started the year in Japanese classes and 90 have signed up for this fall. The school doesn't know whether the program will continue after the 2004-05 school year.

Stories and photos from wire services

Horoscope

The full moon in Aquarius is that rare phenomenon called a blue moon. The term is used to describe the second full moon in one month or, more traditionally, the fourth full moon in a season. Use the extraordinary occurrence to do something you hardly ever do, take a wild chance or enjoy an indulgence that's uncommon to you.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY

(July 31). Your commitment to your own vision makes you powerful. October shows you studying, adopting new thought patterns and attracting a powerful mentor. Early November is ideal for presenting your business ideas or applying for a higher position.

Singles spark with prospects in December, and relationships have a passionate cycle into the new year.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your curiosity usually leads you in a terribly interesting direction, but now, the need to know could get you in trouble. This probably won't displease you because you want the truth at any cost, and you can't be blamed for that.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). You may feel a little disconnected from reality, which is simply because you're in a state of overload. The remedy is not to do less but to add more to your plate. This forces you to prioritize and focus.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You may find yourself saying "no" a hundred times — you're not being negative. Rather, you are figuring out what you really want by process of elimination. Drama builds in a love relationship. This is the stuff soap operas are built on.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). You'll be magnetically drawn to what teaches you more about life. It's a challenge to get a group of people organized toward one task, but you're the one who is able to get others in a cooperative mood, so take the lead.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). You're a detective, ferreting out the true motivations of others — seemingly

illlogical behaviors are clever disguises that you see right through. Use one of your well-entrenched talents to make an impression on someone tonight.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22).

Keep your imagination in check. In your mind, you've built what seems like a monstrous obstacle to the success of a relationship. In actuality, this problem can probably be handled in one courageous phone call.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22).

You get instant respect if you can set standards and stick to them. An adversary may offer you a direct challenge, and you'll probably win if you accept, but it's worth it? Time away from it all is what you need tonight.

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21).

You believe in magic, it happens. You'll get a platform to speak your wishes and state your cause. You have lots of fans; at least one is in high position. Make sure there is plenty of fun for interaction with your family.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21).

Feeling affectionate, you attract those who need to be cuddled and coddled. Since you are currently blinded by a potential sweetheart's attractiveness, don't make rash choices. Dance by yourself tonight.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19).

Parents are on your mind — heal old wounds by being the first to forgive. You may be called on to defend someone. Give up on normalist strict relationship requirements. Friends show you in your best light.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18).

People in your inner circle are the treasures of your life. Informal gatherings are the best. The conversation is interesting, the food is delicious, and everyone takes special care to be charming.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20).

A romantic encounter turns into an adventure. Travel is indicated. You'll run into key people who are receptive to your playful energy. Singles find love on the go. Taurus and Gemini are the luckiest to partner with.

Creators Syndicate

Joyce Jillson



Calvin and Hobbes



Jump Start



Zits



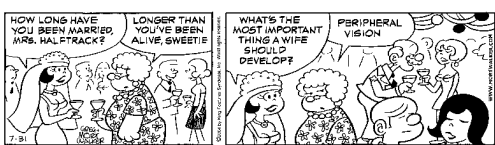
Kathy



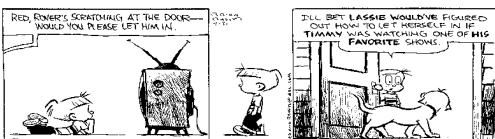
Hi and Lois



Beetle Bailey



Red and Rover



Better or Worse



Peanuts



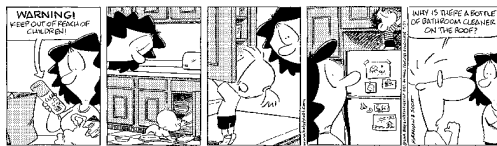
Fox Trot



B.C.



Baby Bites



Spider Man



Blondie



Dilbert



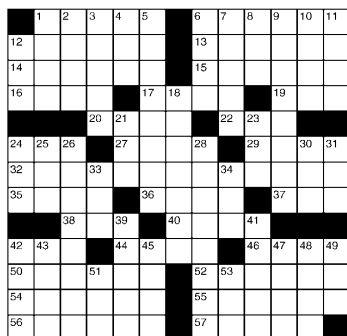
Hagar



Garfield



Eugene Sheffer Crossword



Across

- 1 Hoofed beast of the tropics
- 6 Exalted
- 12 Danson's
- 13 "Cheers" role
- 14 Hard and cold
- 15 In the vicinity
- 16 Kitchen gadget
- 17 "Well"-financed org.
- 18 Basilica section
- 19 Expert
- 20 Ship's framework
- 21 Trench
- 22 Blubber
- 23 Carrots' mates
- 24 Stead
- 25 Joe Klein best seller
- 26 Bygone times
- 27 Actress Polo
- 28 Tandoori bread
- 29 Stick with a kick
- 30 Hang (on)
- 31 Jongg predecessor
- 32 One of the "Golden Girls"
- 33 Writer Ferber
- 34 Establish by decree
- 35 Approached
- 36 Hard to find
- 37 Proofreader's headpieces
- 38 Minty sensations
- 39 Body shop concerns

Down

- 1 Rainout need
- 2 Lotion additive
- 3 Joey's place?
- 4 Hostel
- 5 Signal of imminent danger
- 6 Venomous vipers
- 7 Precipitous
- 8 Driver's spot
- 9 Kinship
- 10 A Baldwin
- 11 Muse's musician
- 12 Long March leader
- 13 Cast
- 14 — tree
- 15 Under the weather
- 24 Austin Powers, e.g.
- 25 Acapulco gold
- 26 Present time?
- 28 Used caller ID
- 30 Detergent name
- 31 Annapolis abbr.
- 32 Chaps
- 33 Tin Man's need
- 39 Moment
- 41 Long
- 42 Maximum
- 43 St. Louis landmark
- 45 Individuals
- 47 "Phoey!"
- 48 Continental Airlines Arena team
- 49 Oklahoma city
- 51 Branch
- 53 Prior to

Answer to Previous Puzzle



7-31

CRYPTOQUIP

B BZWFBKD W EDWYYX
 FIIC-YIIQBKF GWEGWEBWK
 FHX ZBFQJ GD KWZDC

WJJBYW JQD QHKO.
 Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHAT LAMINATED PLASTIC BRAND WOULD A BIBLICAL PROPHET USE? FOR-MICAH, OF COURSE!
 Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals B

Mother needs to be responsible

Dear Abby: My husband and I are raising our 4-year-old granddaughter, "Nicole." We've had her since she was a year old. Our daughter, "Terri," lives 1,800 miles away and has nothing to do with Nicole. The only time we hear from Terri is when she wants money.

Terri knows that our upstairs apartment is vacant and now she wants to move in. She's six months pregnant, has no job and no help from the father of the baby. If we allow her to move upstairs, not only will we be paying for the baby, but we'll be raising it, too, while she runs around all day and parties all night. (That's the reason we have Nicole.) I have said no to her moving back here. She thinks I'm wrong, and so does my husband. When Terri came to visit last Christmas, all we did was fight because of her ways. If she doesn't get her way, she

becomes very mean and says ugly things in front of Nicole. I'm said to say this, but I'd rather not have Terri around as an example for the child. Am I wrong? Should I let her come home?

Dear Terri: No. For your own sake, as well as your granddaughter's, do not allow Terri to move in. Your daughter is an adult and should learn to act like one. If she lives under your roof, she will rule the roost, and your husband will continue to side with her. Unless you want to be an unpaid maid and baby sitter, stand your ground.

Dear Abby



Dear Abby: I am 18.

My boyfriend and I have been together for about two years. During that time, we've lived together, and we know each other inside and out.

When I told my mother

months ago that we were getting married, she dismissed it. She said she didn't have the money to help out with a wedding. When we told her we had decided to go to a justice of the peace, she said she'd be gone camping that day. I'd really like for my mother to be there. My father died when I was 8, and she's the only parent I have. I love her dearly and can't figure out why she wouldn't want to be there, because I'm her only child. What's your take on this, Abby?

—Hurt and Confused in Oregon
Dear Confused: That's a question you should be asking your mother. She may have concerns because you are marrying so young. Or she may not approve of your boyfriend. But you will never know the answer unless you ask your mother how she feels about your plans. Please don't wait to do it.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles, CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

MOURF

HADEA

SLAQU

GURTIA

ANS:

ANS:

ANS:

ANS:

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME by Henri Amick and Mike Arglin



Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

A **(Answers Monday)**

Yesterday's Jumbles: BRIBE IRONY GLANCE UPTOWN Answer: What the deep thinker focused on when he bought a large-screen TV — THE "BIG PICTURE!"

Check up on private caregivers

Dear Annie: I am a private caregiver, and my clients are wonderful.

One of my clients is in a very upscale senior retirement home. In the past year, I've become aware of another caregiver who is not doing her job. This woman leaves her client alone for hours while she goes off and does her own thing. Once, while the caregiver was away, her client fell and sustained a serious injury to her back. The caregiver lied to the clients' family and said it was a simple accident.

This caregiver is self-employed and answers to no one. Please, Annie, remind people to check things out thoroughly when something happens to a loved one and to make sure the caregiver is doing his or her job. I see what really goes on, but my hands are tied. Thank you.

—Anonymous in Bellevue, Wash.

Annie's Mailbox



Dear Bellevue: Untie your hands and help this woman. Talk to an administrator at the retirement home. It is very likely that the home faces some liability if the woman falls "by accident" too many times. Your name does not have to be mentioned for the staff to alert the family to investigate the circumstances of the fall more thoroughly.

Also, every state has an ombudsman program where you can lodge complaints anonymously. Check with your local county Area Agency on Aging or the Eldercare caller hotline at 1-800-677-1116 (eldercare.gov).

Dear Annie: This is in response to "C.A.," whose husband had a cell phone affair. It was not until after my husband of 15 years filed for divorce that I discovered the extent of his cell phone and text-messaging affair.

He always paid our cell phone bills, and I never had any reason to check them. He had a dispute with the phone company, and when a copy of the invoice came, I saw it.

In one month, he called this woman 70 times on her cell phone and 22 times at work. My husband said she was just a friend. Do I have "stupid" written on my forehead? I do not call my best friend this many times in one month.

I, too, would like to know if this is becoming a trend. What type of person has an affair like this when it destroys families?

—Heidi
Dear Heidi: The same type of person who has an affair without the cell phone. New technology has certainly made it easier to sneak around.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of the Ann Landers column. Please e-mail your questions to anniesmailbox@comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 5777 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

Family Circus



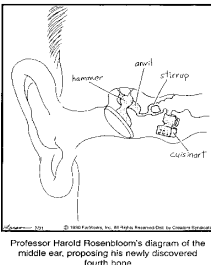
"Gee! This is too much like SCHOOL!"



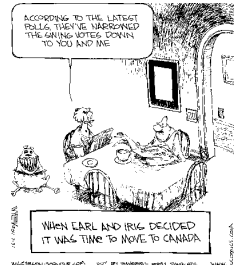
Dennis the Menace



The Far Side



Non Sequitur



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Long and Foster

Drawn to Disney's magic with 1,643 tattoos

BY MICHELE HIMMELBERG
Orange County Register

SANTA ANA, Calif. — George Reiger Jr. claims to be Disney's No. 1 fan.

If you want to challenge him, you'll have to beat this: 1,643 tattoos of Disney characters from the base of his neck to the tips of his toes; a 4,200-square-foot house in Bethlehem, Pa., with 19,000 Disney collector pieces, and six honeymoon at Walt Disney World in Florida.

And when he finally leaves it all behind, his will calls for his ashes to be spread in the Pirates of the Caribbean ride. Nothing is more important than Disney, says Reiger, who was in Anaheim,

Calif., last week for the National Fantasy Fan Club convention, a gathering of Disney collectors.

Many have devoted their vacations and paychecks to Disney memorabilia; Reiger has devoted most of his skin — and his life — to the Magic Kingdom.

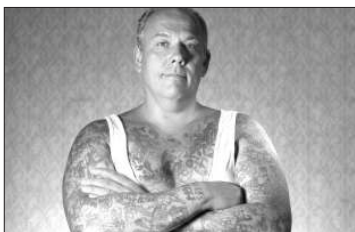
Reiger strolled the convention rooms in shorts and a tank top, showing off his tattoos. A decade ago, there were 300 and his goal was 500. Now, he keeps squeezing them in, adding 47 Disney rides, 111 cast members and 13 hidden Mickey's to the characters.

On his forearm is Reiger's first and favorite, the one he got at 18 — Mickey Mouse as the apprentice in the film "Fantasia."

Each tattoo is drawn by Sam Snyder of Easton, Pa. It's part of the deal Reiger made with Disney to wear the copyrighted characters on his body. He also agreed not to appear in a tattoo magazine or to make money off his display.

Reiger admits that it's odd for a 50-year-old man to be obsessed with characters created for children. But he says the magic created by Walt Disney filled the void of his childhood. He grew up with his grandmother and Disney television shows. He visited his first theme park, Disneyland, at age 8. "Disney raised me," he said. "It's my family."

He figures he pours \$50,000 a year into the company cash registers.



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George Reiger Jr. has been getting Disney tattoos for 32 years.

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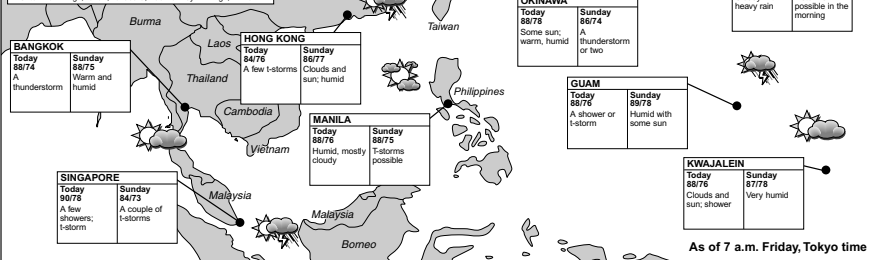
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The Pacific Forecast

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Tide Table				
	Today		Tomorrow	
Mainland Japan				
Yokosuka	5:29 a.m.	7:11 p.m.	6:12 a.m.	7:40 p.m.
Sasebo	9:22 a.m.	10:21 p.m.	10:02 a.m.	10:55 p.m.
Choshi				
Cheyi Island/Sogwipo	10:24 a.m.	11:09 p.m.	11:10 a.m.	11:57 p.m.
Kumam	3:59 a.m.	3:16 p.m.	3:59 a.m.	4:07 p.m.
Daewhae, Naha	6:05 a.m.	1:45 p.m.	6:13 a.m.	8:25 p.m.
Gura, Aomra Harbor	5:45 a.m.	8:41 p.m.	6:43 a.m.	9:22 p.m.
Mainland Japan				
Yokosuka	12:01 a.m.	12:23 p.m.	12:36 a.m.	1:02 p.m.
Sasebo	3:43 a.m.	3:54 p.m.	4:20 a.m.	4:33 p.m.
Choshi				
Cheyi Island/Sogwipo	5:48 a.m.	5:02 p.m.	6:45 a.m.	5:56 p.m.
Kumam	10:02 a.m.	10:00 p.m.	10:49 a.m.	10:48 p.m.
Daewhae, Naha	12:50 a.m.	1:45 p.m.	1:13 a.m.	1:49 p.m.
Gura, Aomra Harbor	12:50 a.m.	1:21 p.m.	1:46 a.m.	2:12 p.m.

* For tides at other sites apply minutes below to Naha tides:
 Sukku, Ora Wan: -30. Sasebo Sympy: +11. High and low tide:
 Cheyi Island: -10. Sogwipo: -10. Aomra: -10. Gura: -10. Kumam: -10.



As of 7 a.m. Friday, Tokyo time

Extended Forecasts

TOKYO
Monday: Periods of clouds and
sunshine,
high 84, low 73.
Tuesday: Showers,
high 85, low 74.

KADENA
Monday: Thundershowers
high 83, low 75.
Tuesday: Showers,
high 86, low 78

SEOUL
Monday: Thunderstorms,
high 96, low 78.
Tuesday: Periods of clouds and
sunshine,
high 88, low 70.

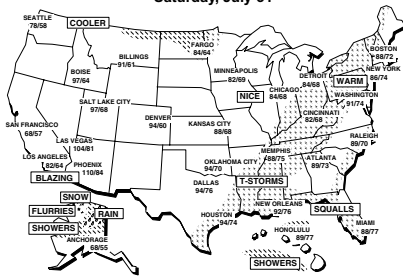
MANILA
Monday: Thundershowers,
high 88, low 75.
Tuesday: Thunderstorms,
high 87, low 74.

HAGATNA
Monday: Thunderstorms,
high 89, low 78.
Tuesday: Thunderstorms,
high 88, low 77.

Thursday's USA Temperatures

CITY	HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW
Buquerque	87/82	Los Angeles	80/70
Amarillo	78/61	Little Rock	82/70
Anchorage	74/54	Louisville	85/70
Asheville	83/65	Madison	82/70
Baltimore	92/70	Milwaukee	82/68
Birmingham	88/72	Nashville	88/74
Bismarck	76/49	New York	84/74
Boise	85/63	Omaha	83/70
Boston	82/68	Orlando	92/71
Brownsville	90/80	Philadelphia	89/79
Buffalo	92/86	Phoenix	107/87
Burlington	87/72	Pittsburgh	87/74
Charleston, SC	87/74	Portland, ME	86/74
Charlotte	87/69	Portland, OR	86/74
Chattanooga	80/65	San Lake City	82/74
Columbus, OH	85/66	St. Louis	82/74
Duluth	73/53	San Antonio	94/81
El Paso	92/68	San Diego	91/81
El Paso	88/64	San Juan	91/81
Helena	92/68	Santa Tampa	91/81
Indianapolis	86/65	Tulsa	79/70
Jacksonville	87/63	Washington	79/70
Kansas City	81/62	Wichita	79/70

Saturday, July 31



U.S. Extended Forecast

A frontal boundary stretching from Ohio to northeastern Texas will spread showers and storms from upstate New York to the Gulf Coast Saturday. Low pressure in the Gulf of Mexico will pump plenty of moisture across the Florida panhandle west to Mississippi's Gulf Coast to enhance thunderstorms over the region. A weak cold front will cross the central Great Lakes, bringing showers to Wisconsin and Michigan. A strong ridge will build over the West, promoting dry weather in places with abundant clouds and limited sunshine will be along the West Coast from Washington to Oregon in the afternoon. A slowly moving frontal boundary will continue to produce showers from western New York to eastern Texas Sunday.

Saturday's Pacific Temperatures

CITY	HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW
Bangkok	88/74	Iwakuni	86/75	Sasebo NB	86/76
Beijing	90/75	Kadena AB	88/78	Sapporo	80/68
Camp Casey	91/76	Kunsan AB	88/75	Seoul	92/76
Carlsrueh	45/31	Kwajalein	88/76	Shanghai	94/80
Diego	84/76	Manila	88/76	Singapore	90/78
Hagata	88/76	Misawa AB	86/71	Sydney	64/45
Hanoi	87/75	Osan	91/77	Taegu	90/75
Hong Kong	84/76	Perth	60/43	Taipei	92/76
		Pusan	89/77	Tokyo	90/76

Saturday's World Temperatures

CITY	HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW	CITY	HIGHLOW
Acapulco	91/77	Budapest	78/59	Kabul	95/81	Nairobi	76/52
Athens	85/66	Buenos Aires	94/68	Kiev	79/58	New Delhi	91/74
Auckland	84/62	Cairo	100/108	Kuwait	114/83	Oslo	72/57
Baghdad	116/84	Cancun	86/72	London	74/60	Paris	82/59
Bangkok	92/67	Cape Town	84/73	Manila	73/60	Rio de Janeiro	78/59
Barcelona	112/68	Geneva	83/67	Mexico City	72/54	Rome	85/69
Berlin	82/60	Istanbul	79/61	Montreal	80/64	St. Petersburg	68/54
Bermuda	85/73	Jerusalem	90/68	Mogadishu	84/72	Stockholm	68/51
Buenos Aires	94/68	Johnsburg	90/68				



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2:30 The Osbournes: Fashion Advice
 3:00 World Chart Express Supported by
 Head
 3:00 Punk'd: Ashton Kutcher
 3:30 Top Choice
 4:00 I-Catch Saturday
Evening
 7:00 Making the Video
 7:30 Rock On
 8:00 Consensus: Sum41
 8:30 Screen
 9:00 Rock Artist Special: Asian Kung-Fu Gen-
 eration, The Chemical Brothers, Dave
 Navarro
 10:00 Summer Sonic '04 Performing Artists
 Special: Zebrahead, Mando Dia
 11:00 U.S. Top 20 with Super Dry
 11:30 Punk'd: Ashton Kutcher
 12:00 Check the Rhyme
 12:30 The Osbournes: Fashion Advice
 1:30 Rock
 2:00 After hours

RACING STRIPES

A WEEKLY LOOK AT MOTORSPORTS

Stewart answers critics in Victory Lane

NASCAR's bad boy does his best when the heat is most intense

BY JENNA FRYER
The Associated Press

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — When the going gets tough for Tony Stewart, he responds the only way he can — by answering his critics on the race track.

NASCAR's reigning bad boy and 2002 Cup champion has shaken off one controversy after another to string together three consecutive top-five finishes and his only victory of the season.

"We've been through so much controversy in my whole career in the Cup series, anymore I'm just kind of numb to it all," Stewart said. "It's not a distraction to me, it's not an aggravation to me. I've found a way to simplify everything and not worry about it."

Under fire most of the season from his fellow competitors for aggressive driving, things boiled

over in late June in a confrontation with rookie Brian Vickers following the race in Sonoma, Calif.

Vickers claimed Stewart hit him in the chest while he was sitting inside his car, and NASCAR gave careful consideration to suspending Stewart before the July 3 race at Daytona.

When Stewart was instead fined and placed on probation, his rivals wondered how he avoided a stiffer punishment.

Stewart ignored them and finished fifth at Daytona.

He then won his first race of the season at Chicago, but that was marred, too. Stewart knocked Casey Kahne out of his way en route to victory and a fight erupted in the pits between Kahne's crew and Stewart's crew.

Stewart tuned that out, too, along with the boos that rained down on him in Victory Lane.



Tony Stewart, who won the series title in 2002, said, "We've been through so much controversy in my whole career in the Cup series, anymore I'm just kind of numb to it all. ... I've found a way to ... not worry about it."

Snippets on Stewart



"Tony Stewart is very emotional. But he's easygoing, he's laid back, he's fun to be around and he's got a good sense of humor. So you've found a way to simplify everything and not worry about it."

Joe Gibbs
Stewart's team owner



"He definitely needs to get suspended. Nobody has ever really grabbed him and given him a good beating. If he doesn't get suspended, maybe I'll do that."

Ray Everham
Kahne's car owner



"He's two different people... I don't think he's grown up as far as really understanding how the public looks at him. He'll eventually learn to look at the bigger picture."

Richard Petty
NASCAR great

Meanwhile, the firestorm around him grew to sizable proportions.

"He definitely needs to get suspended," Ray Everham, Kahne's car owner, fumed after the Chicago altercation. Everham also said Stewart could use a "good beating."

"That's the problem with him," he added. "Nobody has ever really grabbed him and given him a good beating. If he doesn't get suspended, maybe I'll do that."

Stewart kept racing, and fin-

ished fifth last week in New Hampshire.

He heads into this weekend's event at Pocono Raceway in fourth place in the driver standings and a favorite for the Nextel Cup title when the 10-race play-offs begin in September.

It's a trend Stewart has followed throughout his NASCAR career. When he's in the most trouble, he has his best races. The theory was proven in 2002 when Stewart punched a photographer following the race in Indianapo-

lis, then rebounded to win the next week at Watkins Glen.

"When I'm in the race car, my job is to go out and win the race," Stewart said. "And that's what my passion and desire is, whether it's in a midjet or in a sprint car or in the Nextel Cup car."

No one denies Stewart creates a ton of aggravation for his Joe Gibbs Racing team and is often a major headache for Atlanta-based sponsor Home Depot. The company was embarrassed

SEE CRITICS ON PAGE 35

NASCAR NEXTEL CUP

Race 20: Pennsylvania 500, 1:30 a.m. Monday, AFN-Atlantic.

Last race: Kurt Busch took advantage of Ryan Newman's late misstep and pulled away from Jeff Gordon to win the Siemens 300 at Loudon, N.H. Busch was the only driver to stay with pole-winner Newman through most of the race, passing him twice and, finally, pulling away from Newman and runner-up

Gordon at the end of his second win of the season and 10th of his career. Busch's first win since Bristol in March moved him from ninth to sixth in the driver standings.

Last year: Late caution flags helped Newman stretch his gas to the end, allowing him to hold off Busch and win the Pennsylvania 500.

DRIVERS TO WATCH



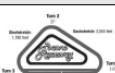
Jeremy Mayfield is a 11th place on a race place on the but he's only finished in the Chase for the 10th place because he was caught in a caution. Another could deny him a spot place Newman.



Ryan Newman is on a roll place on a race place on the but he's only finished in the Chase for the 10th place because he was caught in a caution. Another could deny him a spot place Newman.



Michael Waltrip is on a roll place on a race place on the but he's only finished in the Chase for the 10th place because he was caught in a caution. Another could deny him a spot place Newman.



Qualifying record
Kathy Kuhnle, 172.539 mph, 2004
Race record
Rusty Wallace, 144.892 mph, July 21, 1996

FAST FACTS

Dale Earnhardt Jr. drove the first 61 laps at Loudon before being replaced by Martin Truex Jr. Earnhardt Jr. was turned on his legs and chin after crashing during an American LeMans Series practice the previous week. Ryan Newman had his first top-10 finish since winning last month at Michigan. Jimmie Johnson won the Pocono 500 on June 13.

BUSCH SERIES

POINTS RACE
After 19 of 36 races

1. Ammie Johnson 2,850
2. Dale Earnhardt Jr. 2,685
3. Jeff Gordon 2,648
4. Tony Stewart 2,548
5. Matt Kenseth 2,481
6. Kurt Busch 2,396
7. Bobby Labonte 2,370
8. Elliott Surrick 2,353
9. Kevin Harvick 2,348
10. Ryan Newman 2,348
11. Jeremy Mayfield 2,242
12. Dale Jarrett 2,221
13. Jamie McMurray 2,214
14. Casey Kahne 2,186
15. Mark Martin 2,185
16. Michael Waltrip 2,110
17. Casey Mears 2,083
18. Sterling Marlin 2,041
19. Rusty Wallace 2,038
20. Terry Labonte 2,009

FORMULA ONE

Last race: Hungarian Grand Prix, Aug. 15, Budapest.

Last year: Michael Schumacher matched his own record of 11 victories in a season after winning the German Grand Prix. Schumacher has also won six straight, tying the mark set in 1952 by Alberto Ascari.

INDY RACING

This week: Michigan Indy 400 at Brooklyn, Mich. (4 a.m. Monday, PAC).
Last race: Darío Franchitti won his first IRL race, taking the inaugural Melvin A.J. Foyt Indy 225 at The Mi-

waukee Mile. Franchitti missed almost all of 2003 after a motorcycle accident.

Last year: Alex Barron passed Sam Hornish Jr. in the final turn to win the Estabrook 400 at Michigan with the fastest average speed in circuit history, 188.216 mph. Barron won by 0.0213 seconds.

Next race: Seltzer Casino Indy 300, Aug. 15, Sparta, Ky.

CHAMP CARS

This week: Grand Prix of Road America in Elkhart, Wis.

Last year: Paul Tracy vaulted back into championship contention after winning the Molson Vancouver Indy. Tracy, who led the season-opener on April 18, is third in the standings, 44 points behind leader Sebastian Bourdais.

Last year: Polester Bruno Junqueira moved into the standings by winning the rain-shortened Mario Andretti GP.

Next race: Aug. 15, Denver.

CRAFTSMAN TRUCK

This week: Truck beginning 200 in Brooklyn, Mich. (2 a.m. Sunday, PAC).

Last year: Dale Earnhardt Jr. won the second truck driver to win by leading the final lap at the Dodge Ram Tough 200 in Madison, Ill.

This year: Brad Blundell ran the fastest race in truck history in the Sears 200 in Michigan. Blundell averaged 154.044 mph, eclipsing Kurt Busch's mark of 144.369 mph.

Next race: Power Stroke Diesel 200, Aug. 6, Indianapolis.

Eli Manning gets rookie record \$20M signing

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Eli Manning has yet to play an NFL game and he's almost as wealthy as his brother, the league's co-MVP.

Manning, the first overall pick in the NFL Draft, signed Thursday with the New York Giants on a deal that includes a \$20 million signing bonus in a package that with incentives could be worth \$54 million over six years.

The base package is \$45 million.

The bonus is one of the highest in NFL history, the top being the \$34.5 million paid to Peyton Manning when he re-signed with Indianapolis this year. The difference, of course, is that Peyton is one of the NFL's

Raiders sign No. 2 overall pick Gallery

top stars and Eli might start this season on the bench behind Kurt Warner, signed by the Giants to ease the rookie's transition from Mississippi to the NFL.

But the bonus is comparable to that paid in recent years to such veteran stars as the Giants' Michael Strahan and Philadelphia's Donovan McNabb. And it's 43 percent higher than the \$14 million Cincinnati gave Carson Palmer as the No. 1 pick in the draft last season.

"It was a very complicated contract," said Ernie Accorsi, the Giants general manager who began intensive work on the deal Tuesday with Manning's agent, Tom Condon.

"You always want players in on time. But sometimes that's not possible. We're

all restricted to a percentage of increases every year. It's a puzzle."

The signing is liable to ease the backlog of first-round signings in a week in which all 32 training camps are opening.

Here are the Manning signed, offensive tackle Robert Gallery, the No. 2 pick by Oakland, did the same.

Gallery's deal, which includes \$18.5 million in guaranteed money, is for seven years and could reach \$60 million with incentives.

"It's as complicated a contract as I've ever done," Gallery's agent, Rick Smith, said.

Gallery, who played at Iowa, is considered the best offensive line prospect since

Orlando Pace went No. 1 overall to St. Louis in 1997. And he's expected to compete for a starting job in the fall.

"The top of the first round is exploding," said Leigh Steinberg, who represents Ben Roethlisberger, the third quarterback chosen and the 11th pick overall. Steinberg said he expected a deal between his client and the Pittsburgh Steelers in a couple days.

It's not clear what might happen with quarterback Philip Rivers, taken fourth by the Giants and traded to San Diego for Manning, who had made it clear he didn't want to play for the Chargers. Rivers is seeking to be paid as the first pick in the draft, something the Giants were glad to do with Manning but something the often penurious Chargers might not care to do with Rivers.

Rivers' agent, Jimmy Sexton, is believed to be seeking a bonus similar to Manning's.

Critics: Racer has raised millions for charity

STEWART, FROM PAGE 34

in its hometown earlier this month when the No. 20 Chevrolet was heavily booed as it drove around the field during an Atlanta Braves game.

But all that is overshadowed by a tremendous talent on the track that forces those around him to overlook the bad things.

"Tony Stewart is very emotional," Gibbs said last week. "But I think he's one of the neatest guys — he's easygoing, he's laid back, he's fun to be around and he's got a good sense of humor."

"So you've got to take the good and try to balance that out."

Often lost in Stewart's negative actions is his off-track charity. He's helped raise millions of dollars for Kyle Petty's Victory Junction Gang camp, just one of several organizations he helps out, and was recently given NASCAR's "Good Guy" award by The Sporting News.

How could the Bad Boy of NASCAR also get the Good Guy award?

"He's two different people from the standpoint that he's given us a bunch of awards at Victory Junction," Richard Petty said. "Yet he goes around and does some childish stuff. I don't think he's grown up as far as really understanding how the public looks at him."

"He'll eventually learn to look at the bigger picture."

Gibbs thinks Stewart already is. He said last week that Stewart must perform as if he has "two strikes against him" and that the driver finally understands that.

"I think what Tony has to understand is his past, and he has had situations there and he can't be put in those situations again," Gibbs said. "I think he's determined to do that. We're not looking to control him. He just has to be careful about the situations he gets in, knowing how much publicity it gets."

"Whenever Tony Stewart does something, it's a big deal."

System, supporting cast have Vick eager

BY KEITH PARSONS

The Associated Press

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Michael Vick tossed a perfect spiral about 50 yards toward the corner of the end zone, where Peers Pierce outran a defender to catch the ball just as he tumbled into the end zone.

It was a spectacular play — even if it came Wednesday on the first day of training camp — and clearly showed that the Atlanta Falcons' variation of the West Coast offense won't strictly be short passes over the middle.

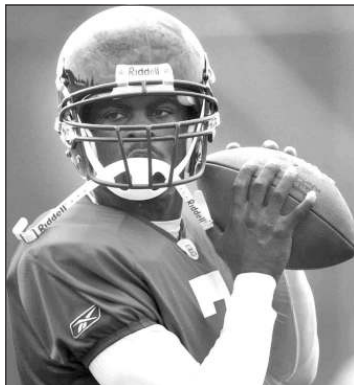
"I think he is the right guy," Falcons quarterback coach Mike Johnson said of Vick. "Will he ever be a straight drop-back guy where you throw the ball 25 times in the pocket? That's not him. You're taking away from his strengths if you do that."

Vick spent the offseason studying video and learning the new playbook, and he attended most of the voluntary workouts. He got to know new offensive coordinator Greg Knapp, who installed a similar offense to the one he used the previous three years with the San Francisco 49ers.

So far, Vick appears to be having fun, and he's heard plenty of good things about this style of play from cousin Aaron Brooks, the starting quarterback for the New Orleans Saints.

"A lot of guys enjoy playing in this system," Vick said. "I talked to my cousin, who would cost him a four-game suspension if he decides to return to the NFL. The Miami Herald reported on its Web site Thursday.

Williams told the newspaper that marijuana played a large role in his retirement that he initially indicated. He said he learned of the failed test and possible suspension days before telling coach Dave Wannstedt last week that he was through playing.



Quarterback Michael Vick is having fun learning a new offense that Falcons coaches insist will take advantage of his unique skills.

backs in the league, and I'm just trying to get into a system where I can do that."

For the first time, Vick also likely has the supporting cast to help him reach his goal. Price moved back to flanker after the Falcons signed free agent Dez White as their other wide receiver, and the

shift should help Price get closer to the career-high 94 catches he had in 2002 with Buffalo.

Last season, his first with Atlanta, Price had only 64 receptions and three touchdowns, his lowest total since 2000.

"It's more of a comfort level thing," Price said. "That's where

I played my whole career, except for last year. It's just more freedom. It's easier to get off the line and do things."

Vick and Price never got much of a chance to bond on the field in 2003, since Vick broke his leg in the preseason and missed nearly 12 games. Now, with this new offense, they get a chance to learn each other's moves all over again.

"I actually played this offense before, during my third year in Buffalo," Price said. "I put up decent numbers and I wasn't even the featured guy, that was [Eric] Moulds."

"But now that I'm that guy, I think it's going to be great. This offense fits all of us."

Getting back on the field capped a hectic summer for Vick.

Besides his work with the Falcons and making sure his injured leg was completely healed, he had to deal with two arrests of his younger brother, Marcus, who followed him to Virginia Tech.

Marcus Vick was suspended indefinitely from the team earlier this month after he was charged with reckless driving and possession of marijuana. In May, the 20-year-old Vick was sentenced to 30 days in jail and fined \$2,250 on three counts of contributing to the delinquency of a minor after he and two teammates gave alcohol to 14- and 15-year-old girls at the players' apartment.

Through it all, Michael Vick supported his brother, and that continued Wednesday.

"I think he'll be fine, man," Michael Vick said. "Just sitting out, he'll be all right."

Williams admits he failed a third drug test

The Associated Press

MIAMI — Retired Dolphins running back Ricky Williams said he failed a third drug test for marijuana use, when he would cost him a four-game suspension if he decides to return to the NFL. The Miami Herald reported on its Web site Thursday.

Williams told the newspaper that marijuana played a large role in his retirement that he initially indicated. He said he learned of the failed test and possible suspension days before telling coach Dave Wannstedt last week that he was through playing.

Williams said, however, that there were "a hundred reasons" for his retirement and that his desire to continue smoking marijuana was only one of them.

"I didn't quit football because I failed a drug test," he told the Herald. "I failed a drug test because I was ready to quit football."

Williams told the newspaper that he is not addicted to marijuana.

In May, three South Florida newspapers quoted unidentified sources saying Williams tested positive for marijuana and faced a fine of at least \$650,000 for violating the substance-abuse policy for the second time since

joining the Dolphins in 2002.

He told the Herald for Thursday's story that he already decided to quit football before that second positive test. He appealed that fine, but received word last week that his appeal had been denied, the Herald reported.

While the appeal was pending, Williams said, he continued smoking marijuana during a trip to Europe and failed a third test upon his return.

He said he had been using a masking agent to cleanse his system while being randomly tested for two seasons but he didn't do that before the last test.

Stuppies shoots 65, leads major in England

The Associated Press

SUNNINGDALE, England — Karen Stuppies made seven birdies in a bogey-free 7 under 65 Thursday, putting her three shots ahead of defending champion Annika Sorenstam in the Women's British Open.

Golf roundup

Sorenstam was in a group of five players at 4 under. South Korea's Jung Yeon Lee was alone in second place after a 67.

Stuppies, an Englishwoman whose only LPGA Tour victory came in the season-opening event in Tucson, Ariz., held the lead midway through the Evian Masters last week but finished fourth.

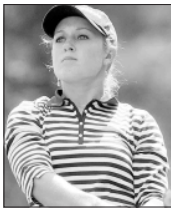
American Natalie Gulbis, Scotland's Catriona Matthew, Finland's Minna Blomqvist and Germany's Bettina Hauert were tied with Sorenstam.

U.S. Women's Open champion Meg Mallon shot a 75.

Playing what she termed "strategic" golf, Stuppies used her driver just four times and stayed out of the bunkers. She also made two 15-foot birdie putts, with others coming from closer range.

By the time Stuppies finished, Sorenstam was long gone.

Chasing her eighth career major victory and second of the



American Natalie Gulbis, who has one, shot a bogey-free 68 Thursday in the Women's British Open.

season, Sorenstam had an early start and took advantage of the sunny, windless conditions on the par-72, 6,392-yard Sunningdale Golf Club Old Course.

The Swede picked up birdies on Nos. 2 and 3, and after bogeys at the fourth and sixth holes, birdied Nos. 7 and 9 before playing the back nine in 2 under 34.

Sorenstam's iron play was precise; the longest of her birdie putts was 9 feet.

Edfors, Howell share lead in Scandinavian Masters

LÖDDEKOPINGEN, Sweden — European Tour rookie Johan Edfors shot 5-under-par 67 Thursday and was tied with England's David Howell after the opening round of the Scandinavian Masters.

Jesper Parnevik, two-time winner of the event, shot 69. Lee Westwood, three-time Scandinavian champion Clont Montgomerie and defending champion Adam Scott shot 72.

Bryant's lawyers claim accuser got \$17,000 to continue case

By JON SARCHÉ

The Associated Press

DENVER — Kobe Bryant's defense team says the woman accusing him of rape has received more than \$17,000 from a victim's compensation fund in what it calls a rich incentive to pursue a false claim against the NBA star, according to a court transcript released Thursday.

The 20-year-old woman would be ineligible for at least \$17,000 she has already received if she lied about the alleged rape, defense lawyer Pamela Mackey argued in a June 21 hearing. She said the woman would have to reimburse the fund if lies were discovered — even more incentive to go forward with the case.

Mackey said the compensation records should be admitted as evidence because they show the accuser had a financial interest in continuing the case.

"[The accuser] has profited to an enormous amount, \$20,000, I would expect to most people, just this country is a lot of money, most

of our jurors, and she has done that on the basis of a false allegation and has persisted in that false allegation," she said.

It was unclear whether the compensation information will be allowed as evidence. District Judge Terry Ruckledge released the partial transcript along with a sealed ruling on use of the material.

The judge released the transcript of the closed-door hearing after being pressured by the Colorado Supreme Court and U.S. Supreme Court Justice Stephen Breyer to seal a First Amendment fight. A transcript of closed hearings on June 21-22 were mistakenly e-mailed to seven media organizations, which held off on publishing the content while they challenged a contempt of court threat from the judge.

Prosecution spokeswoman Krista Flannigan declined to comment on Mackey's arguments, but said the accuser remains determined to go forward with the case.

Bryant has pleaded not guilty to felony sexual assault, saying he

had consensual sex with the then-19-year-old employee of the Vail-area resort where he stayed last summer. If convicted, Bryant faces four years to life in prison or 20 years to life on probation, and a fine up to \$750,000.

In another development, in a sealed document mistakenly posted on a court Web site, the judge in the case said hospital tests performed on Bryant found his accuser's DNA — but none from an unidentified person whose DNA showed up on other evidence.

Bryant's lawyers could use the findings in his upcoming trial to bolster their claim that the woman had sex with men other than Bryant during the week of the alleged assault. They had succeeded earlier this month in getting the judge to throw out the same results on grounds that investigators didn't have the proper court order to take Bryant to the hospital in the middle of the night.

In his filing, Ruckledge said the prosecution does not intend to introduce the same details and he ordered both sides to come up with an agreement by Friday.

Nets trade Kittles to Clippers

The Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. — Kerry Kittles was traded to the Los Angeles Clippers for a second-round draft pick Thursday, breaking up a successful backcourt pairing with All-Star Jason Kidd.

Kittles became the second starter to leave the Nets this month.

All-Star forward Kenyon Martin was sent to the Denver Nuggets for three first-round draft choices two weeks ago.

To replace the void left by Kittles, who spent eight years with the Nets, the club signed free-agent guards Jacques Vaughn and Rodney Buford.

Kittles has averaged 14.3 points, 2.6 assists and 3.9 rebounds a game during his career. Last season, Kittles played in all 82 regular-season games and averaged 13.1 points and 4 rebounds.

The Clippers also renounced the rights to guard Quentin Richardson, who had signed a six-year offer sheet with the Phoenix Suns worth \$45 million.

Stojakovic bypassing Olympics

Peja Stojakovic said Wednesday he will not play

NBA briefs

for Serbia and Montenegro in the Athens Olympics, depriving the defending world champions of their best perimeter scorer.

The three-time NBA All-Star said he was tired and that his decision is irreversible — though people in his homeland are urging him to change his mind.

"No way I already spoke with the team officials. We talked about it, and it's done," Stojakovic told The Associated Press. "I'm not going to go."

Stojakovic will be in Greece during the Olympics, fulfilling the end of a three-month stint in the Greek army. He holds dual citizenship in Greece and Serbia and Montenegro.

Heat re-sign Rasual Butler

MIAMI — The Miami Heat gave Shaquille O'Neal frontcourt help Wednesday by re-signing free agent forward Rasual Butler.

Butler, a 6-foot-7 small forward and a second-round draft pick in 2002, averaged 6.8 points and 1.4 rebounds in 45 games last season. He also led the team in three-point field goal percentage (.463).

Big Mac eaten up in debut of major amateur golf event

The Associated Press

BENTON TOWNSHIP, Mich. — It certainly wasn't a home run for Mark McGwire on Wednesday.

The former slugger made his debut in major amateur golf with a 12-over 82 in the 102nd Western Amateur, leaving him 17 strokes behind the leaders and tied for 152nd in the field of 156.

"I feel like a rookie playing in

his first major league game, very much so," McGwire said at the Point O'Woods Golf and Country Club. "I have a long way to go to play with these guys."

McGwire is a long shot to make the cut after Thursday's second round, which pares the field to 64 for match play.

"I love to watch these guys play," McGwire said. "They can really get up and down and they consistently make good shots. I was kind of in awe of them."

Sports briefs

PHOENIX — The Phoenix Coyotes have made a two-year contract offer to right wing Brett Hull.

"We have a genuine interest, we've made a serious and substantive offer, and we're awaiting his reply," Coyotes General Manager Mike Barnett said Wednesday.

Barnett is Brett Hull's former agent, and Wayne Gretzky, the Coyotes managing partner, is a close friend of Hull. Hull's agent, the younger brother, Bobby Hull Jr., confirmed the Coyotes are a major player in landing Hull.

"If you know the relationship between Brett and Wayne Gretzky, and Brett and Mike Barnett, you know what a great fit this would be," Bobby Hull Jr. said. "Brett loves Phoenix and he's very comfortable

with the situation. Their offer is both generous and very serious."

Hull, who will turn 40 next month, had 25 goals and 68 points last year for Detroit, his 18th NHL season. He ranks third in career goals with 741.

In other NHL news Wednesday, the Detroit Red Wings re-signed defenseman Mathieu Dandenault to a one-year contract worth \$1.6 million, General Manager Ken Holland said.

Agassi ousted in Masters Canada

TORONTO — Andre Agassi was upset by Jurgen Melzer of Austria 6-3, 6-3 Thursday in the second round of the \$2.5 million Masters Canada tennis tournament.

Top-ranked Roger Federer reached the quarterfinals by winning twice. First he topped Robin Soderling 7-5, 6-1 in his second-round match. Then the Wimbledon champion eliminated Max Mirnyi 7-6 (3), 7-6 (4). Mirnyi earlier beat No. 14 Paradorn Srichaphan 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

Defending champion Andy Roddick defeated Feliciano Lopez 6-4, 7-6 (5) and was to play again later Thursday in the rain-delayed tournament.

In other matches, No. 4 Carlos Moya beat Alex Bogomolov Jr. 6-4, 6-3, 6-3, 9-7. Lleyton Hewitt downed Jiri Novak 6-4, 6-3, and three-time French Open champion Gustavo Kuerten eliminated No. 5 Tim Henman 7-5, 6-4.

Trojans favored to win Pac-10 title

LOS ANGELES — Defending national

champion Southern California was the unanimous choice to repeat as Pac-10 football champion in preseason media polling, the first time a team received all the first-place votes since the conference expanded to 10 teams in 1978.

California, the only team to beat USC last year, finished second in the preseason voting. Oregon (192 points) was picked to finish third and was followed by Oregon State (138), Washington State (135), Arizona State (131), Washington (100), UCLA (98), Stanford (40) and Arizona (38).

The poll has predicted the conference champion correctly for the past four years and five of the past six.

Meanwhile, USC coach Pete Carroll believes a decision from the NCAA on wide receiver Mike Williams' eligibility will come within a couple of weeks.

Coyotes make two-year contract offer

Braves rough up Mesa, ray past Pirates

The Associated Press

PITTSBURGH — Rafael Furcal made up for two errors with a go-ahead single in the ninth as the Atlanta Braves rallied against closer Jose Mesa to beat the Pittsburgh Pirates 2-0 on Thursday.

The Braves won three of four in the series and have now won 15 of 20 overall in building a 3½-game lead in the NL East over Philadelphia and Florida.

Mesa had converted 29 of 30 save opportunities heading into the ninth, but immediately got into trouble when Johnny Estrada and Julio Franco singled.

Jack Wilson's throwing error helped Franco's infield single also helped by moving Mark DeRosa, who ran for Estrada, to third.

Eli Marrero's infield grounder scored the tying run and Furcal put the Braves ahead with a single that fell in front of left fielder Jason Bay.

Jose Cruz (3-0) pitched a perfect eighth inning for the victory before John Smoltz finished in the ninth for his 23rd save in 25 games and third of the series. He has saved in five of the Braves' last six games.

Marlins 10, Phillies 1: Alex Gonzalez hit the first grand slam of his career and Dontrelle Willis (8-6) pitched seven innings as Florida swept Philadelphia at home for the fourth time in a row. It was the Phillies' 14th consecutive loss in Miami, seven this year. Most of the games have been close, but this time seven consecutive Marlins scored in the tying inning against Paul Abbott (1-5), capped by Gonzalez's 15th



Pittsburgh's Jack Wilson scores in the third inning Thursday against the Atlanta Braves. Atlanta scored twice in the ninth to win the game 3-2.

home run for an 8-0 lead. Willis limited Philadelphia to five hits and one run while enjoying plenty of run support.

Mets 10, Expos 1: Eric Valente made the fourth player this season to hit for the cycle and Mike Cameron homered twice for New York.

Valente tripled in the seventh to get the cycle, achieved previously this year by Milwaukee's Chad Moeller, Pittsburgh's Daryle Ward and Philadelphia's David Bell.

Valente singled following Cam-

eron's two-run homer in the second, and doubled after Cameron's solo shot put the Mets up 5-0 in the third. Valente hit a two-run homer off Montreal's Sun-Woo Kim in the fifth.

Cubs 4, Brewers 0: Carlos Zambrano gave up four hits over eight shutout innings and Sammy Sosa homered for visiting Chicago.

Zambrano (10-6) walked two and struck out eight in snapping a personal three-game losing skid.

Tom Gooden and Todd Walker hit back-to-back doubles to

open the fifth and Sosa followed with a two-run homer, his 22nd.

Diamondbacks 6, Astros 4: Lance Cormier won the first game of his brief major league career and Shea Hillenbrand hit a two-run homer as Arizona won for only the second time in 18 games.

Cormier (1-2), making his third start in the big leagues, lasted six innings and allowed three runs on eight hits with five strikeouts.

Hillenbrand's shot just over the left-field fence in the fifth gave the Diamondbacks a 6-1 lead.

Dodgers 3, Rockies 2: David Ross and Jayson Werth homered and Wilson Alvarez (6-3) allowed two runs and four hits in five innings for visiting Los Angeles.

Alvarez, who won his third straight decision, combined with Duane Sanchez, Darren Dreifort, Guillermo Mota and Eric Gagne on the four-hitter. Gagne got four outs for his 30th save in 31 chances. The Dodgers have won 13 of their last 17, and 10 of 13 on the road.

Colorado's Todd Helton hit his 22nd homer.

In Wednesday's NL games:

Cardinals 11, Reds 10: Scott Rolen hit two of visiting St. Louis' four homers as the Cardinals beat the Reds for the 11th time in 13 games. Jim Edmonds homered in all three games of the series as the Cardinals swept Cincinnati. The Cardinals, 42-14 since May 17, built an 11-game lead over Chicago in the NL Central.

St. Louis starter Jeff Suppan walked a career-high 11 in 4½ innings of the game that took 3 hours, 55 minutes — the longest time in the game of the season for both teams.

Astros 6, Diamondbacks 1:

Roger Clemens (12-3) struck out eight and allowed one run in seven innings, leading host Houston over reeling Arizona for his 322nd victory.

Jeff Kent hit a two-run homer in the third and Jeff Bagwell followed with a solo shot.

Arizona lost for the 16th time in 17 games.

Marlins 6, Phillies 3: Hec Socch hit a tiebreaking three-run homer in the eighth and Florida extended its winning streak against the Phillies in Miami to 13 games, including six this year.

Braves 1, Pirates 0: Russ Ortiz (12-6) shut out Pittsburgh for seven innings to win his 100th career game and Chipper Jones homered for the game's only run. Jones connected off rookie Oliver Perez (6-5).

Expos 7, Mets 4: Tony Batista homered and drove in two runs and Nick Johnson hit a go-ahead RBI double in the fifth to lift the host Expos over New York.

Brewers 6, Cubs 3: Chris Capuano (5-6) pitched effectively into the seventh inning and Bill Hall and Ben Grieve homered to help host Milwaukee snap a four-game losing streak.

Kerry Wood (5-4) allowed seven hits in five runs and seven hits in six innings.

Rockies 5, Dodgers 4: Aaron Miles hit a tiebreaking single off Guillermo Mota (8-4) in the eighth and Jeremy Burnitz homered in his third straight home game to tie a team record, leading Colorado over visiting Los Angeles.

Padres 9, Giants 4: Sean Burroughs had a two-run single and Ryan Klesko added a two-run double in the sixth, lifting the host Padres over San Francisco.

A-Rod, Varitek suspended

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — New York Yankees star Alex Rodriguez and Boston Red Sox catcher Jason Varitek were suspended for four games apiece and fined Thursday, and six other players were punished for their roles in a bench-clearing brawl last week.

Yankees pitcher Tanyon Sturtz and Red Sox outfielders Gabe Kapler and Trot Nixon were suspended for three games and fined by Bob Watson, major league baseball's vice president of on-field operations. Yankees outfielder Kenny Lofton, Red Sox pitcher Curt Schilling and Red Sox designated hitter David Ortiz were fined.

Rodriguez, the Yankees' All-Star third baseman, and Sturtz are appealing their suspensions. Varitek, Kapler and Nixon also plan to appeal, Red Sox spokesman Glenn Geffner said.

"I thought it was too much, four games," Rodriguez said before Thursday night's game against Baltimore. "I was surprised it was that harsh. I've seen some harsher actions over the last month and it's five games."

"I think my time is going to

Briefs

come in front of Bob Watson," he said. "Hopefully, it'll be one or two games."

The fight broke out in the top of the third inning of the AL East rivals' game at Fenway Park on Saturday after Bronson Arroyo hit Rodriguez with a pitch.

Rodriguez stared down Arroyo as he started walking toward first. Varitek, still wearing his catcher's mask, got between them as the AL MVP walked up the baseline.

After some jawing — Rodriguez said his language was "strong and ugly" — Varitek pushed A-Rod, and as they began wrestling, both dugouts and bullpens emptied.

Rodriguez said he thought the person who throws the first blow should receive a more severe penalty.

"I was on my way to first base and I got punched in the mouth by a glove," he said.

Several scuffles erupted, with Kapler battling Sturtz, soon joined by Nixon and Ortiz. Sturtz was bleeding from the left ear.

"I think three games is too much for me," Sturtz said. "I was just trying to get a guy off the pile and I ended up on an island over by the dugout."

Netting erected at Wrigley
CHICAGO — Workers at Wrigley Field put up heavy netting to protect fans from falling chunks of concrete.

City officials can postpone Friday's game against Philadelphia if the netting isn't fully installed or if they conclude it doesn't adequately protect fans. Chicago Department of Buildings spokesman Jack Beary said.

There have been three reports of falling concrete at the stadium since June. No injuries have been reported.

Mets suspend Spencer

MONTREAL — Shane Spencer was suspended without pay by the New York Mets on Wednesday, one day after he was arrested by the Florida Highway Patrol and charged with driving under the influence.

Spencer, in Florida to work out at the Mets' minor league facility in Port St. Lucie, was stopped for driving 96 mph in a 70 mph speed zone on I-95 in St. Lucie County.

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Borkowski quiets Boston's big bats

The Associated Press

BALTIMORE — When the Baltimore Orioles called up Dave Borkowski from the minor leagues earlier this month to fill a hole in the starting rotation, the strategy was to use him for one game and then send him back to Triple-A Ottawa.

The Boston Red Sox wish the Orioles had stuck to their original plan.

Borkowski took a two-hitter into the eighth inning and Javy Lopez hit two homers off Curt Schilling to lead Baltimore past the Red Sox 4-1 on Wednesday night.

Facing a torrid-hitting club that scored 39 runs on 52 hits in its previous four games, Borkowski (2-2) allowed three hits in seven-plus innings. He struck out seven and walked none in a brilliant — and unexpected — performance.

Borkowski, who entered with a 3-11 career record, last pitched in the majors in 2001, before being called up from Ottawa on July 5.

He permitted only one runner past second base in ending the

best of Schilling, whose four-game winning streak ended. "It was a weird, humid night. It just didn't seem like a regular Sox night," said Kevin Millar, who had one of Boston's four hits. "We just didn't swing the bats the way we're capable. We just couldn't get a rhythm going."

The majority of the credit goes to Borkowski, who earned an extended stay with the Orioles by handcuffing Tampa Bay in his first appearance in the majors in three years. If Borkowski continues to pitch as he did against the Red Sox, then he may never take another bus ride in the minors.

Schilling (12-5) allowed four runs and seven hits in seven innings, striking out two and walking none. He was 8-1 with a 3.61 ERA in his last 12 starts.

Indians 5, Tigers 4: Scott Elarton won for the first time in 18 starts, and Casey Blake's two-run homer in the seventh inning lifted host Cleveland.

Elarton (1-2) hadn't won since Sept. 19, 2003, for Colorado.

Devil Rays 10, Royals 1: Mark Hendrickson gave up four hits in his second complete game in three starts and Tampa Bay handed Kansas City its sixth straight loss.

Jose Cruz Jr., Aubrey Huff and



Baltimore's Dave Borkowski got the better of Boston's Curt Schilling on Wednesday night as the Orioles beat the Red Sox 4-1.

Tino Martinez homered for the host Devil Rays, who have won two in a row following a six-game losing streak. Tampa Bay hit just 17 homers the previous 24 games.

Blue Jays 3, Yankees 2 (10): Vernon Wells homered in the 10th inning and Carlos Delgado had a tying RBI double in the eighth to lead Toronto at home.

Wells homered off Scott Proctor (1-1) with one out as Toronto avoided a three-game sweep. In the top of the 10th, Wells robbed Derek Jeter of extra bases with a running catch at the wall in center field.

Save: Lackey finally gets past Rangers

SAVE, FROM BACK PAGE

Lackey (9-9) won for the fifth time in six decisions, tying a season high with seven strikeouts, walking one and retiring 15 of his last 16 batters after losing his other two starts against Texas this season.

"It was kind of a mixed feeling after the eighth," he said. "I knew Percy was at 299, so I wanted to give him an opportunity at 300. But I also felt good, and I thought I could finish it. I left it in his hands, and he told me to go back out there."

The victory was Lackey's third in eight career decisions against the Rangers — including his first major league shutout, and the game that clinched a wild-card berth for the Angels two years ago.

Lackey retired his first nine batters before giving up a leadoff single in the fourth to Michael Young. Texas' only other hits were a single by Teixeira and a leadoff double by Gary Matthews Jr. in the fifth.

Kenny Rogers (13-4), starting on the 10th anniversary of his perfect game against the Angels, allowed two runs — one earned — and nine hits in seven-plus innings. The All-Star left-hander struck out one and walked none.

"It was just a terrible night for

us," Texas' Lincecum said. "Lackey had good command, and we just weren't patient enough to get our pitch. We have to have a better approach against a guy like that — and make adjustments. When we have Kenny pitching for us, he deserves better."

The loss reduced the Rangers' lead in the AL West to a half-game over Oakland and three over the third-place Angels.

Anaheim opened the scoring in the second when All-Star third baseman Hank Blalock fielded Molina's routine grounder with plenty of time to get Erstad at the plate — and made a wide throw to Gerald Laird.

Angels center fielder Garrett Anderson, who didn't start the previous five games because of a strained groin, returned to the lineup as the DH and drove in Anaheim's second run with a felder's choice groundout in the fifth.

Notes: Blalock has just 11 hits in his last 72 at-bats, and none in his last 17. ... Lackey has walked no more than two batters in 18 of his 20 starts this season, and has given up fewer than three earned runs in seven of his last eight outings. ... The Rangers were shut out in consecutive games for the second time this season. It also happened May 26-27 against the White Sox at Chicago.

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SPORTS



Rodriguez, Varitek suspended
four games each for brawl
at Fenway Park, Page 37



More history for Percival

Closer earns
300th save
with Angels

The Associated Press

ANAHEIM, Calif. — Troy Percival and John Lackey teamed up for another history-making night for the Anaheim Angels.

Percival earned his 300th career save, and Lackey allowed three hits in 8 1/3 innings, leading Anaheim to a 2-0 victory over the Texas Rangers on Wednesday night.

They also collaborated in Game 7 of the 2002 World Series, with Lackey getting the win and Percival closing it out to secure the Angels' first championship.

"It's just an honor to be involved in this game with him getting to 300," Lackey said. "He's such a professional and such a great guy to play with. I have no idea how many of my games he's closed out, but most of the time when he comes in, it's pretty much over."

Percival became the 18th member of the 300-save club, striking out Alfonso Soriano and getting Mark Teixeira to ground out to end the game. The right-hander was hugged by first baseman Darin Erstad, and then catcher Bengie Molina before the entire team congratulated him near the mound.

"All of us know it is a pretty good milestone — I mean, only 18 people have done it thus far," Percival said. "I was out there when my teammates needed me 300 times, and I'm real proud of that. It was good to get it out of the way so that we could just concentrate on winning ballgames."

As he walked off the field, Percival waved to the crowd just before walking into the dugout. A video montage of his career highlights was also played on the scoreboard.

Once inside the clubhouse, he was toasted by his teammates with cups of beer instead of the usual champagne that's brought out for such an occasion.

"To the greatest closer we know, without question," injured pitcher Jarrod Washburn said.

Moments later, Percival posed for a group picture holding a baseball with "300" on it. Surrounding him were Lackey, Washburn and the rest of the relievers. Percival then looked at setup man Francisco Rodriguez and handed him the ball.

"Frankie, you definitely have to get in here for this one, because I'm going to be back here for your 300th," Percival said.

Despite his second save in two



Anaheim Angels pitcher Troy Percival works in the ninth inning against the Texas Rangers at Anaheim Stadium on Wednesday. The Angels beat the Rangers 2-0 and Percival earned his 300th career save.

nights, Percival's milestone required a long wait. It was only his fourth opportunity to close a game since June 1. He spent two weeks on the disabled list because of inflammation in his elbow.

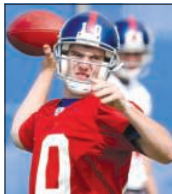
The four-time All-Star recorded his first big league save on

July 14, 1995, at Detroit. He had a career-high 42 in 1998 and became the Angels career saves leader on June 20, 1999, when he eclipsed Bryan Harvey's mark of 126.

"Early in my career, 300 saves was the only goal I had — if I could be around long enough to

get it," Percival said. "I thought to myself, if I could get 300, I'd feel like I'd accomplished something — especially knowing that Goose Gossage, one of my favorite players of all time, had over 300. But I hadn't thought about it again until this year."

SEE SAVE ON PAGE 38



Manning sets
rookie record with
\$20M bonus;
Raiders sign
OT Gallery

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NASCAR's Bad Boy
responds to
controversy with
strong finishes

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Bryant's lawyers
claim accuser got
\$17,000 from
compensation fund
to pursue case

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